UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

THE NON-PARTISAN BALLOT

IN CERTAIN PENNSYLVANIA CITIES

A THESIS

IN GOVERNMENT

PRESENTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

BY

J. T. SALTER

PHILADELPHIA

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To

My Father and Mother

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If democracy is flouted, what remains? There was a Greek proverb, "If water chokes, what can one drink to stop from choking?" If the light of democracy be turned to darkness, how great is that darkness. . . . Yet the right way to judge democracy is to try it by a concrete standard, setting it side by side with other governments.

—Bryce, "Modern Democracies"
Vo. II. p. 534.

PREFACE

Some years ago I read Graham Wallas's pioneer volume on "Human Nature in Politics." This work stimulated my interest in field studies as contrasted with the more formal library studies. It centered my attention on the importance of making quantitative studies of the political process as revealed by elections, ever present party campaigns, and the unfolding drama of live politics, and gave me with real vividness the idea that the ward boss is a more important source of certain political truth than armchair speculation and reading about him can possibly be. These ideas were further emphasized by a course in political parties taken under Professor Merriam. A few months later at the University of Pennsylvania I was one of a small group in a municipal government seminar, given by Dr. H. W. Dodds. And it was at this time that the present investigation of the non-partisan ballot was begun. The subject was selected first because it was inextricably mixed with the present day realities, wants, and attitudes in the municipal sphere of our political process; and moreover, Pennsylvania's experience with the non-partisan ballot was so recent, and the period of her experience was so sharply limited (1913-1919), that one would doubtless be able to establish contacts with those most familiar with the background and actual operation of the non-partisan ballot. This ballot in itself, however, was of no particular interest to me.

Some of the difficulties of this investigation were foreseen at the beginning. First of all, there is no exact unit of measurement by which one can ascertain the degree of partisanship or non-partisanship at a given primary election. Neither is there any instrument that the social investigator can use to isolate and detect the precise number of partisan bacilli in a supposedly non-partisan administration. But this difficulty, though at the present time insurmountable, is not identified with any particular type

of study. It is a condition that invariably confronts those investigators that seek to evaluate certain of the most vital forces in government. This is the reason that, as Norman Angell has suggested, scholars generally are apt to prefer to study the neater formulations of other scholars, than the confusing, intermingled, social and political relations in which we live.

In spite of the uncertainty and difficulty involved in a study of a phase of the actual political process, I chose this problem, because I do not see how progress can be made in introducing the scientific method into the study of politics unless quantitative investigations of live materials are attempted.

There are certain special difficulties encountered in a study of Pennsylvania's experience with the non-partisan ballot that rise out of this particular problem. First of all there is no central source for securing election statistics, names of candidates, financial statements, and newspaper files for the different cities that use the non-partisan ballot. This has made it necessary for me to follow what may be called an itinerant and exploratory method of research. More than once in the course of this investigation I have been reminded of the experience of a certain Chinese student. In searching for the implications of a philosophic problem this student found that it rested on three other propositions, the exact nature of any one of which could not be explored without examining three underlying propositions. Each of these in turn depended upon three other propositions and so on ad infinitum. The pertinent facts that I attempted to survey and evaluate in this non-partisan study never stood out in naked isolation from other related facts. Most of them were surrounded with a penumbra of attitudes, traditions and social, political or economic factors. This made rigid delimination necessary. One might write a book about the experience of one city with a particular type of electoral machinery and not exhaust the subject.

A study that surveys the operation of a ballot in different elections in 28 cities must be selective. (Such questions as the relation between the social composition of a ward and the political activity of the people therein; the difference in the vital and other statistics in a non-partison administration as compared with an administration in which officials were elected on partisan ballots; a complete record of those men elected in one era who could not have been elected in the other when a different type of ballot was used; the number of men nominated by both the major parties after the repeal of the non-partisan system—these are a few of the topics that have been considered but are not included in this final statement.)

Bryce said that, "It is Facts that are needed, Facts, Facts, Facts. When facts have been supplied, each of us can try to reason from them." I have presented here some of the pertinent facts concerning Pennsylvania's experience with the non-partisan ballot; and my aim has been to present the facts accurately and adequately. This has led me to quote directly many letters, interviews, and newspaper articles the substance of which might have been compressed and summarized into one-tenth or one-fiftieth of their present space. Just as a fresh fig has a certain desirable quality that a dried one can never have, so do the direct words of a politician carry a meaning, and an atmosphere, a breath of the man's personality, that will in a large part elude a summarized statement. In the field of political theory, the conclusions of Montesquieu, or any other philosopher, on the nature of law, are not important unless one follows the steps by which these conclusions were reached. So in this investigation the writer found that it is not enough to merely know that a man was for or against a certain ballot. A "yes", or "no", will reveal one aspect of a person's opinion, but not the entire opinion; and sometimes not the most important part of it. It well may be that one person who answers "yes", or another who answers "no", to the same question, have

views on the essential nature of the non-partisan ballot that are more in agreement than are views of two other individuals who both answer "yes", or both answer "no", to the same question. It may perhaps be said that, unless one prints only a limited number of questionnaires or editorials, they will overlap. In one sense this is true—they will overlap just as candidates in a campaign, or voters in a municipality, overlap; but then, again, no two interviews are identical. Neither can two letters or editorials be the same, any more than two personalities, or two fingerprints, can have the same characteristics. However, where this difference in points of view expressed was not great, viewpoints were summarized. In many instances where the exact words of the person considered measurably helped to describe some part of the political process of which the non-partisan ballot was a factor, the verbatim record is given.

It is for these reasons that the writer hopes that this thesis will be of value, not only as a study of the non-partisan ballot, but as a collection of source materials on certain phases of the political process in different Pennsylvania cities.

The most significant aspect of my intellectual development had its inception in my contacts with Mr. Fred Edinger, and Professors Karl Frederick Geiser, James T. Young and Charles E. Merriam. I can never adequately repay my obligations to them, but I am happy to indicate them. Professor Young has also helped with searching questions and friendly counsel at different important stages in the course of this investigation, and at the final reading of the manuscript.

I wish to most heartily thank Mr. C. K. Warren for early advice and encouragement. To Dr. H. W. Dodds, in whose memorable seminar this study was begun and to the Honorable Clyde L. King under whom this investigation was completed I am deeply grateful. The vivid discussions and

lectures in municipal government courses given by the Honorable Clinton Rogers Woodruff and personal conferences in his law offices will always be happily remembered. Mr. Woodruff also read that part of the manuscript devoted to the legislature; his comments materially strengthened this section. I deeply appreciate the privilege that has been mine in discussing parties and politicians in a Thursday evening seminar with the Honorable Roland S. Morris. I also wish to thank Professor Charles Maxson for helpful co-operation given me while I studied the Pennsylvania legislature in his state government class. Dr. Harry Barth read my entire manuscript and gave me the benefit of his comments and searching criticisms—a service of the greatest value. The late Professor Victor West permitted me to present this non-partisan ballot study before his round table at the New York Conference on the Science of Politics. I am grateful to him for this privilege and the group discussion that took place at that time. I wish to thank Mr. Albert Smith Faught who supplied me with important political data concerning Pennsylvania for the 1912-1913 period, and read and helpfully commented on two sections of my manuscript. I am grateful to Mr. Paul Salter for helpfully assisting me in tabulating the votes. To the rather large number of political scientists and sociologists who kindly answered letters regarding different aspects of this investigation I am deeply grateful. They have given me the happy benefit of a variety of enlightened viewpoints that I could ill afford to miss. I hope that this brief indication will in some way serve as a substitute for a more definite acknowledgement.

My debt to the politicians, both the regular party men and the independents, is hardly less. Their assistance has been invaluable at every point of this investigation. The names of B. Frank Ruth and R. J. Wheeler come first to mind, altho two hundred instead of two might justly be mentioned. Newspapermen, who, like Dean Hoffman, answered innumerable inquiries merit my sincere thanks,

which I am glad to give.

I cannot forego this opportunity of again thanking Mr. H. J. Hayden for financial assistance most generously provided in connection with this study.

No statements of my obligations would be complete without mentioning the gracious assistance given me by Katharine Shepard Salter. Her loyal interest in this investigation has been a source of encouragement and inspiration.

I am aware, painfully aware, of the many short-comings in this work, for which I alone am responsible.

J. T. SALTER.

August 22, 1928.
University of Oklahoma,
Norman, Okla.

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INTRODUCTION

The Pennsylvania legislature of 1913 passed the Clark Commission Government Act which provided among other things for the nomination and election of certain city officials on a non-partisan ballot.[1] This ballot was used in the municipal primaries and elections of 1913, 1915, and 1917, and in 1919 it was repealed by the legislature. Since 1919 party ballots have been used in these contests. The question that arises is, why was the non-partisan feature of the Clark Act abolished? Those who favor it invariably say that it was done away with by a reactionary and machine controlled legislature. On the other hand, the opponents of this ballot hold the opinion that it was tried and found wanting. They declare that it failed to separate partisan politics from city elections and made it possible for irresponsible individuals to obtain public office.

Primarily this study is not a library problem, unless one considers an examination of newspaper files among data from other sources such a problem. There is plenty of information to be gleaned, and the raw material on this question is rich and fertile, but it is found in the soil of actual political life in a given municipality, or in the several municipalities that used the non-partisan system. This information is alive and in the minds of men, and in newspaper files of the period, and in other records scattered as widely over the state as are the cities of this group. This knowledge of the non-partisan ballot has not been distilled into books and magazine articles. What has been written about it in other states is invariably an exposition of someone's a priori ideas on the subject; and these ideas

[1]This act applied to all cities of the third class but one, Lancaster, which retained its charter until some years later. There were twenty-eight cities that belonged to this group throughout the entire period of 1913 to 1919, and several boroughs became cities after 1913, but they ordinarily will not be included in this study. These cities, with two minor exceptions varied in population from 10,000 to 100,000 inhabitants.

have not been strengthened by the knowledge that is secured through an inquiry into the manner in which this ballot actually worked in a concrete primary in a particular city.[2]

One immediately asks what sort of facts can be obtained about the actual working of the non-partisan system? Can any test be imposed that will show the degree of partisanship present in an official non-partisan election? How accurately can one measure the effectiveness of the the non-partisan ballot in the period in which it was employed? One must acknowledge at the outset of his investigation that there is no single source at which one can obtain the sort of data that he would like to have in order to evaluate a ballot or an election system. He must also recognize the subjective element that is present in many of the materials that he uses. This will often necessitate verification and checking up in different ways, and it is likely to entail the consideration of two or three facts instead of one. Descriptive facts of varying reliability may be obtained from the sources which the writer will mention;[3] an examination of them will enable one to see important aspects of the non-partisan and partisan campaigns in a realistic fashion, altho the question of the precise effect of one piece of election machinery may be impossible to determine in a complex political situation in which many variables are present.

The general outline of this study may well be given here. The main object has been to compare the six year period (1913-1919) in which the non-partisan ballot was used with the following six year period when municipal officials were chosen under the partisan system.[4] After a chapter in which the provisions of the act are given and its history is outlined, a series of chapters follow in which the comparisons are made.

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[2]The few exceptions to this statement have not been written about Pennsylvania's experience.

[3]See pages 3-4.

[4]Both periods were studied but more attention was given to the former than the latter period.

First, how did men who lived through both periods react to the non-partisan system? How did they compare the two ballots? What did the successful candidates think? How about the defeated candidates? And what of other men who took an active interest in local politics? Then there is the press. Much of value is locked in newspaper files, and the writer has examined sixteen papers for all or part of the periods considered to find the attitude of the journalists and to more vividly see the non-partisan system in action. Lastly the chambers of commerce were appealed to, for the views of the business men may indicate the probable interest of the more general public.

Second, the types of candidates were compared. Which period produced the better candidates as measured by certain tests? In which period, for example, did the lawyer, the doctor, the large scale business man, stand for office?

Third, the interest of the voter in the two periods was examined. Newspaper, questionnaire, and statistical evidence are presented which the writer believes to be significant. Here again is a basis for comparison.

Fourth, some evidence has been accumulated as to campaign methods and expenses. Which period shows the larger expense to the candidate? Did the methods used in the two periods to gain the attention of the voter differ substantially?

Fifth, how partisan is a non-partisan administration? The problem of partisanship in a non-partisan period runs thruout the chapter on opinion, but the partisanship shown in making appointments is most significant, and chapter six is devoted to an intimate survey of a selected area.

In addition to these main tests, a number of questions were asked about the non-partisan period. These were designed to throw light on specific phases of the problem. For example, the statement is made that non-partisanship results in the elimination of issues, that only where parties exist can issues be squarely presented to the electorate. Chapter seven considers this question. Finally, how can public opin-

ion be guided if there are no regular party organizations? Here is an inescapable question, and a chapter is devoted to it.[5]

Final conclusions are given in chapter nine. These have a certain significance, the writer believes, and yet he truly regrets that they are not the sort of findings that the ardent friend or foe of the non-partisan system will be most interested in seeing. One cannot safely make unqualified statements concerning a number of political institutions, and the non-partisan ballot is one of these. However, trends are indicated and a cross section of the electorial process is revealed.

Truth is at best a relative matter and can only be approached. This may be why the quest for it is endless. The writer hopes that he has gone some small way along the path.

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[5]In making comparisons it was frequently impossible to cover every city tho so far as candidate types and various questionnaire surveys were concerned this was actually done. The cities that were studied in connection with any particular topic were chosen either because of the availability of material, or the importance of some local situation or the time and money at the writer's disposal. All of these factors are necessarily important; however the first has invariably been the controlling one. It has been the writer's purpose to bore deeply at certain points rather than merely touch upon all the topics in all the cities. The writer believes that this method is more likely to reveal that which is basic in the operation of the non-partisan ballot.

I

THE HISTORY AND ADOPTION OF THE NON-PARTISAN BALLOT

1. THE MOVEMENT FOR COMMISSION GOVERNMENT

At the first annual convention of the League of Cities of the Third Class the then mayor of Wilkes Barre said,

"Truly, the power in political parties to nominate candidates for municipal offices is blamable, probably, for nine-tenths of the dishonesty and mismanagement now existing in the public service of our city governments. . . . All this can be done (freedom from machine rule can be secured) by abolishing the rule of party nominations in our cities and accepting, as the only method of presenting candidates for municipal offices, nomination papers."[1]

This charge against parties in municipal affairs in Pennsylvania was made in 1900. In the 1905 convention of the League the same charge was made again. Mr. Richards of Reading declared that,

"The two leading causes which lie at the root of municipal inefficiency are, as I apprehend, the general apathy of the citizenship, and the demoralizing influence of partisan politics. . . . The practice of partisan nominations for municipal office, in the majority of cases, works only mischief. Few people have any higher idea of reform in city government than putting their own political party in power. The intelligent class too often votes in municipal elections upon the questions of the tariff, the currency, the foreign policy of the government, or some other national issue."[2]

These early protests against the presence of partisan politics in municipal offices gained strength and increased in volume so that later when there was a definite movement in Pennsylvania for a change in the form of government, the inclusion of the non-partisan ballot was inevitable. Many of those men who worked for a more efficient form of government were fully convinced that, whatever the value of the

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[1]Proceedings of the League of Cities of the Third Class. 1900, p. 38. This League is composed of interested citizens and officials from the cities of the third class in Pennsylvania, and according to its constitution, Article 1, Section 1, the object of this organization "shall be the advancement of the various interests of said cities, and the promoting of such remedial legislation as shall be deemed necessary and essential for the government of said cities, and for the discussion and interchange of any and all topics relating to the welfare and conduct of the same."

[2]Proceedings, etc., 1905, p. 98.

national parties in the national sphere, they had no rightful place in the cities. Just what changes should be made in their city governments was a matter of opinion, but that nominations and elections should be conducted without regard to party connections was a view generally held.[3]

Commission government in Pennsylvania was not secured by any one man; it is the result of the combined efforts of many civic workers, both in and outside of the official city governments. However the one man that doubtless did the most to secure the Clark Act providing for commission government in the cities of the third class of Pennsylvania was A. M. Fuller of Meadville. He was not an office holder but he was intelligently and persistently interested in city government. As a result of his study of commission government and his observation of the operation of city government in Pennsylvania he unqualifiedly supported the commission form of government for cities. In the 1909 convention of the League he gave a paper on this form of government. In a realistic manner he described the Galveston and Des Moines plan, quoted authorities that favored the commission plan and discussed certain weaknesses in the Pennsylvania bi-cameral form of city government. He also presented a resolution that had been passed by the Pittsburgh chamber of commerce urging the civic organizations of the state to inform the people concerning the importance of the commission government. He then explained why the present form of government was inadequate and cumbersome.

The finance and revenue departments were inefficiently managed. The annual budget, the system of bookkeeping in the offices of the comptroller and treasurer and the ordering of supplies were all creations of politics and were not conducted in a scientific or economical manner. And furthermore, "the affairs of the city were largely directed by three or four members of the councils and these directing spirits in the councils divided the responsibility of their action with the entire membership." He concluded "that

[3]Members of party organizations and certain other strong partisans rarely shared this view.

this unfortunate condition of city affairs obtains in most all of the cities of our commonwealth under the present system of city government."[4]

Since the affairs of the municipalities were so wretchedly managed Mr. Fuller urged the delegates to educate the people thru the chambers of commerce[5] and boards of trade so that the legislature at Harrisburg would give Pennsylvania a modern commission form of government. At the 1910 meeting of the League the delegates again discussed the commission government and the shortcomings of the system of government that the Pennsylvania cities then had. A preponderant group of those at the convention favored a change of some sort; a small minority urged caution and spoke against the giving up of a form of government that was tried and known.

Mr. Cochran, the city solicitor of Chester, said that the present bi-cameral system of government was bad and that students of municipal government should be consulted, public opinion in the different communities should be sounded out, and a new plan of government be devised.[6] Mr. Joshua C. Taylor, a lawyer and a student of government of Chester, characterized the whole system of municipal government in Pennsylvania as being vicious and almost entirely in the hands of professional politicians. He then concluded with a statement that these were the causes that had led, in other cities, to the adoption of a commission form of government.[7] Mr. Willert advocated the drawing up of a resolution so that the legislature would know the attitude of the people regarding commission government.

"This convention, I suppose, represents one-fourth of the population of Pennsylvania and each city represented here has at least one legislator within its borders. If we go on record as favoring a resolution of this kind, it will show the legislature—this being the only body of state officials in Pennsylvania—that there is something behind it."[8]

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[4]Proceedings, etc., 1909, p. 151.

[5]He said that the city councils were unfitted to formulate important ideas on such a large subject as commission government.

[6]Proceedings, etc., 1910, p. 110.

[7]Ibid. p. 115.

[8]Proceedings, etc., 1910, p. 127.

Mayor Weaver, of York, discussed the weaknesses in their present form of government. He said that it was both irresponsible and unwieldly and that it therefore delayed legislation. Since the councilmen were not paid for their time, they had other employment, and often failed to attend council meetings. Mayor Weaver strongly favored the commission form of government.[9] Mr. Leo R. Wallace of Pittsburgh joined also with those who so roundly condemned their present form of bi-cameral government in cities. Mr. Wallace advocated among other things that the non-partisan ballot should be used in the election, and nominations should be made by petition.

After this extended discussion of commission government in the 1910 annual convention of the League, the delegates adjourned without voting for any new form of government. However a committee of five men was appointed at this convention, and it, together with the law committee was directed "to prepare such legislation as may be necessary to meet the changed conditions brought about by the new constitutional amendments, and also to consider and determine upon any changes in the existing system of government of cities of the third class."[10]

Later in the year another convention of the League was held. This special session was devoted to a discussion of three major questions. (1) The report of the law committee. (2) The question of whether the League favored commission government for cities? (3) And whether the law committee of this League should confer with the committee of the civic bodies in their efforts for commission government?

The committee in its report said that it would be impossible to prepare legislation until it knew whether there would be a change in the system of government for cities in the third class. The report continued:

"A very large number of our members are in favor of what is known as the government by commision, something similar to what

[9]Ibid. pp. 128-129.
[10]Proceedings, etc., 1911, p. 7.

is known as the Des Moines plan; others are in favor of a lesser number of councilmen, with but one branch in the city government; while some are content with the present conditions."[11]

The committee then agreed upon the following resolution:

"Resolved, that this committee recommend to the convention to be assembled, the framing of a bill providing for the establishing of one body of council in cities of the third class, to be composed of one member elected from each ward and five members to be elected from the city at large, with legislative powers only. . . "[12]

The delegates neither accepted nor rejected the committee report. Ten cities voted for a motion to indefinitely postpone the question of commission government and six cities voted against this motion.

In 1911, at the next regular convention of the League, Richard S. Childs of New York City presented a paper on commission government. After his paper had been read, Dr. Jeffries of Chester spoke at length against the commission form of government. He first wanted to know if the people of Pennsylvania were really suffering from bad city government. He was of the opinion that the cities were pretty well governed.

"Furthermore," he added, "I want to tell you, gentlemen, there is no general specific. A specific may be good for a bee sting, and it may be good for a man that wants a drink of whiskey and doesn't know it. I don't believe that we want a commission form of government. I want to compliment the man (Mr. R. S. Childs) that spoke this afternoon on commission form of government. I do not think he was as bad as the man that read a paper last year. I wish someone would write a paper on the third class cities form of government. There should be a paper read on that next year. They had a man in New Jersey that was in favor of the commission form of government —William J. Bryan is in favor of commission form of government. . . . One of the objects of the commission form of government as I understand, is to take the government of cities away from politics. There are a lot of people that are afraid of professional politics. If you are a Republican, you are wrong; if you are a Democrat, you are wrong. You want to be entirely unbiased. .. . . I believe in a man being a politician, so that he believes it. If he is a mayor or a councilman and belongs to a political party he should do the very best he can for his political party, knowing that the very best he can do for

[11]Ibid.
[12]Ibid.

his political party is the very best thing he can do for his city."[13]

The debates and addresses and work of the League are mainly interesting because they show the vitality and growing strength of the commission government idea, or more accurately, they show the positive desire that many city officials and other civic workers had for securing a less complicated form of government. Save for the fact that one group was more adverse to change, the persons for and against commission government in this one political organization were probably representative of the rest of the electorate in Pennsylvania. The minority in the League that favored commission government, better reflected the opinion of the 1913 legislature on that subject than did the majority who opposed this radical measure. This piece of legislation, the Clark Act, was passed by a legislature that was signally progressive, and at a period in Pennsylvania history when liberal and progressive opinion was most alert and strongest. The Roosevelt victory and the strength of the Washington party in Pennsylvania are indications of the tendency. This was a time when party organizations were on the defensive.

The first organized effort toward passing what later came to be known as the Clark Act was made in 1910 when a call was issued to representative citizens for a meeting to be held in the city hall of Williamsport. This meeting was attended by representatives from cities, boroughs, boards of trade, chambers of commerce, merchant's associations, civic societies and other organizations created for similar purposes.[14] Mr. A. M. Fuller of Meadville was its chairman. He was, as the writer has said, doubtless the citizen most intelligently and persistently interested in commission government in Pennsylvania.

As a result of this convention the Allied Civic Bodies was organized, and Mr. Fuller was elected president and ex-Mayor Ira W. Stratton, of Reading, was chosen as secretary. Much of the vigor and skill with which this organization

[13]Proceedings, etc., 1911, pp. 107-109.

[14]Letter to writer, April 1926, from Hon. Ira W. Stratton who was chosen secretary of the Allied Civic Bodies.

worked and achieved its objective was due to its able leadership. Mr. Stratton was also an active and effective member of the League of Cities of the Third Class of Pennsylvania. Mr. Fuller spoke at different places over the state in favor of this new form of government and became an important factor in molding opinion.

The Allied Civic Bodies was made up of men who were for the most part interested in business rather than government. They joined together in this organization to disseminate literature in favor of commission government; to educate the people on this subject so that there might be a demand thruout the state for it.[15] There were three general public meetings of the Allied Civic Bodies before the Clark Act was passed. There were also many district committee and executive meetings and hearings that greatly supplemented the

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[15]In a letter, April, 1926 from one who was city solicitor of Chester in 1913 the writer received the following information: "The work of creating a sentiment and distributing and spreading propaganda in favor of the commission form of government was done more by groups than by individuals. The individuals who were prominent were connected with groups. The groups consisted of chambers of commerce of most of the cities of the third class, civic societies and organizations . . . .

"The following are some of the groups which were active in advocating the commission form of government:

Allentown—Chamber of Commerce.
City Councils.
Bradford—The City of Bradford.
Erie—Chamber of Commerce.
Board of Trade.
Businessmen's Exchange.
City Councils.
Reading—City Councils.
McKeesport—Civic Societies.
Newcastle—Eighty-five per cent of citizens.
Meadville—Civic Bodies.
Wilkes Barre—Organizations.
Chester—Civic Organizations.
Hazleton—Board of Trade.
York—Chamber of Commerce.
Williamsport—Board of Trade.
Johnstown—Mayor of Johnstown.
Easton—Mayor of Easton.
Harrisburg—Progressive League.
Corry—Council of Corry.
Connellsville—Chamber of Commerce.
Steelton—Progressive League."

work of the general meetings, and "much work was done by correspondence."[16]

As a result of this discussion and the work that the leaders of the movement steadily did, a commission government act was drawn by a former city solicitor of Meadville[17] and introduced into the senate on February 28, 1911, by Senator Clark, of Erie.

This measure passed the senate and then partly because of its conflicting provisions and incongruities, and partly because "it was considered a rash experiment,"[18] it was given an adverse report by a house committee; and this was done at the request of its sponsor, Senator Clark.[19] Some of the city solicitors then went over the bill very carefully and rearranged certain paragraphs and sections that were in wrong places and omitted others that should not have been included at all. The bill was referred back to Senator Clark and his committee, and was re-drafted[20] and passed by the 1913 legislature.[21]

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[16]Letter to writer, April 1926, from Ira W. Stratton, Secretary of Allied Civic Bodies.

[17]Letter to writer, March 1926, from F. H. Schoonmaker who was intimately associated with the work of the League at this time. He said. "In a general way, the Clark Act was drawn by J Manley Brown He was paid $2,000 for drawing the bill by the Committee of Business Men's Associations of Pennsylvania." This is another indication of the concrete interest that business groups felt in securing a modern form of city government.

[18]Letter to writer, May, 1924, from Mr. A. M. Fuller.

[19]F. P. Cummings in Proceedings, etc., 1913, pp. 49-50.

[20]Letter to writer, April, 1926, from A. A. Cochran, city solicitor of Chester.

[21]In a paper prepared for the writer, May, 1924, Mr. Fuller gave this personal account of the passage of the Clark Act. "I then (after being elected president of the Allied Civic Bodies) prevailed upon Manly O. Brown, Esq., of Meadville, an able attorney, to draft the necessary legislation, known as the 'Clark Act.' Pittsburgh, a city of the second class prepared a similar bill. Both bills were presented to the legislature of 1911." Because of the hostile attitude of the committees, Mr. Fuller says that "Pittsburgh sent a large and influential delegation to Harrisburg and demanded relief. The result was that a modified form of commission government was granted providing for a mayor and nine councilmen. The council had heretofore consisted of fifty-seven members elected from wards. In 1913 the Cities of the Third Class again presented their bill known as the 'Clark Act.' It was referred as usual to the senate and house committees on municipal affairs. I immediately got in touch with Senator Penrose. I

A weak form of city government and widespread feeling of dissatisfaction and discontent with it; capable and informed leaders who guided this feeling into constructive channels; a legislature willing to accept measures demanded by the liberal groups, both within and without their own body—these several factors fitted into one another, and commission government, with the non-partisan ballot was secured. In view of these conditions, the passage of the Clark Commission Government Act seems natural, and almost inevitable.

2. COMMISSION GOVERNMENT IN PENNSYLVANIA

In 1913, as the writer has said, the Pennsylvania legislature passed this act providing for government by a commission in the cities of the third class. Up to this time these cities had been governed by a select and common council, the size of which varied in accordance with the population of the city. A small city like Corry had five select and ten common councilmen, while a Reading or a Wilkes Barre might have a legislative body of forty-eight or more members, thirty-two in the lower branch and sixteen in the

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(Footnote continued)
wrote him fully concerning the matter and he replied requesting me to call upon him in Washington. I did not desire to do so and made a satisfactory excuse. I then wrote him that the organization we represented had so far been a non-partisan, non-political body, but that I was assured if we were denied the Clark Act, we would undoubtedly become a political force in the election of 1914. The Senator replied that he was to be in Harrisburg shortly and would give the matter consideration.

"In the meantime on my return from the south, I stopped at Harrisburg to consult with Senator Clark. Senator Clark informed me that many senators were opposed to the 'Clark Act,' but would vote for a 'Home Rule Bill'—that he had a copy of such a bill in his desk at the Capitol and would offer it as a substitute, if we so advised. I said, "no, we want the 'Clark Act' and are willing to abide by the result." Senator Penrose came to Harrisburg as he had stated. The following week the 'Clark Act' was reported upon favorably by both Committees and passed the senate and house by only two dissenting votes in each body.

"I had two interviews with Governor Tener in reference to the 'Clark Act.' He objected to the recall feature and suggested some changes in the initiative and referendum. The recall was taken out, and other changes were made so that the Governor would have no special reason for vetoing the bill when it reached him."

upper. The act of 1913 abolished this antiquated bi-cameral council and established a small commisson of four councilmen or commissioners, a mayor and controller. The new act left the corporate powers of the city practically as they were. It was mainly an adaptation of the third class city law of 1889[24] to the commission form of government.[25] However, it also did away with the party name which had been used in connection with the nomination and election of city officials, and it is this non-partisan feature of the law which is of concern to us in this study. Some of the provisions of the law that bear on the election process follow.

Name on Primary Ballot.—Any qualified voter in any city of the third class may have his name placed on the primary ballot by "the filing of a petition with the county commissioners, at least three weeks before the date of the primary election for municipal offices: said petition to be signed by at least twenty-five qualified registered voters of said city."[26] The petitions shall also set forth the residences and occupation of the candidate proposed and of each person signing the petition, "but said petition shall have nothing therein to designate any political party, or any party affiliation of the person proposed as a candidate, or of the persons proposing the said name."[27]

Form of Primary Election Ballot.—The county commissioners of the county in which the third class city election was to have been held were responsible for the printing of

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[22]Each city was divided into wards and it was entitled to as many select councilmen, and twice as many common councilmen as it had wards. The voters in each ward elected that ward's representatives to council and the councilmen were nominated by the direct primary method.

[23]The four commissioners were elected for a period of two years; both the controller and the mayor were elected for four year periods.

[24]The act that the cities were governed under.

[25]See Spangler, L J H 3, 1913, P. 3809. Also "Oil City Derrick," July 4, 1913.

[26]Section of Act of 1913 governing cities of third class dealing with nominations. Laws of Pennsylvania, Session of 1913, pp. 605-608.

[27]Ibid

the ballots. The non-partisan primary ballot, "shall be substantially in the following form:

Name of office
Vote for (Stating number to be elected)
Name of candidate
Address of candidate
Name of candidate
Address of candidate.

"The said municipal primary ballots shall be uniform: and shall have nothing written, printed, stamped, engraved, or in any way marked thereon, to indicate or designate any political party, or the political affiliations of any candidate for office named thereon."[28] Space was then to be provided below the names printed on the ballot, "wherein voters may insert additional names, if said voters shall desire to vote for a person for said office whose name has not been printed on said ballot."[29]

Order of Names on Primary Ballot.—

"Where more than one person shall be proposed for the same office, the names of the persons proposed shall be placed on said ballot by the county commissioners in the order to be determined by drawing lots, which said drawing shall be done publicly by the County Commissioners."[30]

Notice of the time and place of drawing was to be given to each candidate whose name was on the ballot and he was entitled to be present in person or by representative at said drawing.

Number of Candidates to be Nominated.—Twice as many candidates were to be nominated at the primary election as were to be chosen at the ensuing general municipal election. Concretely that meant that two mayoralty candidates, two controller candidates, and eight commissioner candidates were nominated on the non-partisan municipal ballot.

The General Election Ballot.—The county commissioners were instructed to have the names of the persons nominated

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[28]Ibid.
[29]Ibid.
[30]Ibid.

at the primary printed on the official ballot to be used at the election. Here as on the primary ballot there was not to be

"printed, engraved, stamped, or marked on any ballot anything to indicate any political party or party affiliation of any candidate for municipal office."[31]

Following the names of the candidates nominated at the primary, space was to be provided "wherein any voter may insert the name of any persons for whom he wishes to vote and whose name may not be printed on said ballot."[32]

Order of Names on Election Ballot.—What position should the successful non-partisan primary candidates have on the final election ballot? In what order should their names appear?[33] There was no provision in the Clark Act that answered this question, and in actual practice it was considered in at least three different ways in the several communities at the different elections. First the names were arranged alphabetically; second, position on the general election ballot was determined by lot; third, the nominees were given the same order of preference on the final election ballot as they had enjoyed on the primary ballot.[34]

The election of city officials was in the odd numbered years, the off years as far as all state or federal officials

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[31]Ibid.

[32]Ibid.

[33]In discussing this question of position of names on the non-partisan election ballot, the "Reading Eagle" for Oct. 2, 1913, said, "The Clark Act provides that a drawing shall be held for place on the primary ticket beginning with No. 1. . . . But the non-partisan ballot is silent on the matter of the order of the primary nominees on the regular election ballot." And on Oct. 23, 1913 the "Eagle" added, "County Commissioners Sandt, Rapp and Kutz determined to put the names of the eight non-partisan candidates for city councilmen on the official ballot in the same order in which they were printed on the primary ballot."

[34]This question arose in connection with non-partisan candidates only. Article 8, Section 7 of the Election Laws of Pennsylvania provides that the names of party candidates shall "be arranged under the title of the office for which they are candidates, and be printed in the order of the votes obtained for the head of the respective tickets of the parties or bodies nominating at the last Presidential election, beginning with the party obtaining the highest vote."

were concerned, save supreme or superior court judges, who were to be elected at either a general or municipal election, as circumstances might require.[35] The general election was also to be held biennially, but in the even numbered years. However, this does not mean that only non-partisan officials were chosen at the municipal election, for county officials were elected at the same time and on a partisan ballot, and also certain other city officials were chosen to whom the the non-partisan feature of the Clark Act did not apply.[36]

Form of Municipal Election Ballot.—The charge was made and repeated in a number of cities that the non-partisan feature of the election law was bad because it tended to complicate the ballot and increase the voter's burden. Simplicity was needed and that could best be secured by doing away with this new non-partisan provision.[37] Both the partisan and the non-partisan candidates were on one sheet. In Erie this dual ballot had four columns. The first column contained the party squares and names, the second the nominees to be voted upon in a non-partisan manner, while in the other columns were the names of the party nominees for county and district offices. Beneath the columns were

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[35]Article 9, Section 4, page 575, Digest of Election Laws of Pennsylvania.

[36]It will be remembered that the non-partisan feature of the Clark Act applied to the nomination and election of only three classes of city officials, (1) city commissioners, (2) city mayors, (3) city controllers. Since the term of office for mayors and controllers had been for a period of four years and as it was left unchanged by the Clark Act, it was only in those cities in which the mayor or controller had been elected in 1909 that a mayor or controller was elected in 1913.

[37]See the "Harrisburg Telegraph," October 30, 1913. The "Reading Eagle," October 23, 1913; and the "Chester Times," November 10, 1915. However, these criticisms of the ballot were most loudly voiced at the primary. In Pittston the primary voter received two ballots, one partisan and one non-partisan ballot ("Pittson Gazette," September 16, 1913). In Reading and Lebanon the voters received three ballots, one non-partisan judicial ballot, one non-partisan city ballot, and a party ballot on which he voted for county officials and school controller, magistrates and precinct officers. The use of the ballots caused many voters in Lebanon, according to the "Philadelphia North American" of September 17, 1913, to wait so long in line that the polls closed before they could vote.

listed five proposed amendments to the constitution.[38] The ballot used in Pottsville was very much like the Erie ballot. Here there were eight political parties listed in the first column in the following order. Democratic, Washington, Republican, Socialist, Bull Moose, Roosevelt, Progressive, Prohibition and Citizens. The next column on the ballot was completely enclosed by means of a heavy black line that surrounded the non-partisan candidates. Within and at the top of this enclosed part of the ballot was the statement, "Judicial and City, Non-Partisan." Then immediately below and within the enclosed part followed the other non-partisan offices and their candidates for mayor, for controller and for councilmen. The remainder of the ballot was given over to such partisan offices as sheriff, jury commissioner, inspector of mines, school director, alderman, judge of election and inspector of election.[39] Although that portion of the ballot that was marked off for non-partisan candidates contained no party name, it is important to observe that this particular part of the ballot was buttressed with party labels on its left flank and partisan offices and candidates on its right.[40] If the voter was unmindful of parties when he entered the voting booth he became aware of them the instant he glanced at his ballot.[41]

The Clark Commission Government Act won widespread interest and approval from the minute of its passage and

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[38]"Erie Dispatch," October 8, 1913.

[39]"Pottsville Republican," October 31, 1913.

[40]Three years before the Clark Act was passed Mr. Castner, a delegate to the special convention of 1910 that was held by the League of Cities of the Third Class in Pennsylvania doubtless had this problem in mind when he said, "We elect municipal and county officers in 1911 and 1913. I would suggest that the municipal officers elected in 1911 be elected for two years, and the county officers for four years, so as to divorce the county and the municipality." Proceedings, etc,. 1911, p. 87. This suggestion has never been acted upon by the legislature.

[41]It might be pointed out here that the legislature amended the non-partisan provision of the Clark Act in 1915. The amendment made it unnecessary for mayoralty and councilmanic candidates to stand for election against any regular candidate if they received a majority of votes in the primary. However a sticker campaign might be used against them at the polls for men who were not nominated at the primary.

even before that event.[42] At the 1913 convention of the League, Mr. F. P. Cummings, city solicitor of Williamsport, probably spoke for the majority of the delegates at the convention when he said, "that great good would result from non-partisan elections, and the establishment of a single council instead of the dual law-making body heretofore in vogue, would be in keeping with progress and the expedition of municipal affairs have long been conceded by even the most conservative in public affairs."[43] Before the first primary was held under this radically changed form of government the newspapers in a number of cities effectively carried on a campaign of education, and different public-spirited and informed citizens read papers and delivered addresses on the new commission government. The electorate was urged to feel that its vote was more important now than ever before. Altho county officials were to be nominated on partisan ballots at the same primary at which city officials were to be nominated on non-partisan ballots, interest, if one can judge by newspaper items, editorials and advertisements, was far greater in the municipal campaign than in the county campaign. In Reading the chamber of commerce graphically presented the commission government idea to the voters by the means of a chart. This chart or diagram clearly showed the different elective and appointive offices and their relation one to another. It also contained a digest or summarized statement of the Clark Act. This paper was circulated by the local chamber of commerce and published in the Reading newspapers.[44] Later a paper was presented in Reading by Mr. A. M. Fuller on the meaning and purpose of the Clark Act.[45] Reading was by no means unique in having newspapers that gave editorial and news

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[42]According to an editorial in the "Oil City Derrick," July 4, 1913, representatives from twenty-three cities spoke in favor of the Clark Act at a legislative hearing at the Capitol, and only three cities, New Castle, Williamsport and Harrisburg were opposed to it, and their opposition was to certain provisions rather than to the bill as a whole.

[43]Proceedings, etc., 1913, p. 47.

[44]See original chart, chamber of commerce, Reading, Pa.; also the "Reading Eagle," August 20, 1913.

[45]"Eagle," July 27, 1913.

space to a discussion of the nature and significance of the Clark Commission Government Act. It would be more difficult to find a city in which the newspapers did not freely discuss it than one in which they did. In examining newspapers from fifteen cities the writer has not discovered one city in which the newspapers were silent regarding the change in the form of government or in the form of the ballot. In the majority of cases the emphasis was placed on the new commission, with its small single chamber, but the non-partisan ballot was mentioned too. There was a complete break with the past. A new era was being ushered in. Now a better type of man would seek municipal office. Business men who had never been interested in public office because they were not favored by party organizations, would not come forward under the old regime. But in this 1913 campaign the non-partisan ballot was to be used, and candidates were to be nominated by the voters as citizens, not as partisans. The appeal was made on the basis of merit and without regard to party ties and organizations. In certain cases the tenor of the news items and editorials was to sharply change after the primary, but until then no effort was spared to arouse the interest of the voter in the great task before him.

Some candidates based their appeal for election on the fact that they had carefully studied the new form of government. They would be able to guide the introduction of the system in their city and could explain its basic principles to their newly elected colleagues.[46] Presidents of banks and other prominent businessmen gave special addresses on the new government.[47] The newspapers were especially interested in having the voter understand the magnitude of the undertaking before him. The "Chronicle and News" said:

"Voters of Allentown should not for one moment lose sight of the

[46]"Allentown Chronicle and News," September 4, 1913.

[47]A three-column address on Commission Government was given by Garnett Pendleton, Exp., President of the Cambridge Trust Company, and printed in full by the "Chester Times of November 6, 1913. Earlier in the year this newspaper published a number of front page articles on Chester's new form of government, "Chester Times," September, 1913.

fact that the city is about to undergo a revolutionary change in its form of government and the election is but three weeks off. While the contests for the county offices are important the real vital issue for the tax payers of this city is the proper selection of the four councilmen who will control municipal affairs and have complete charge of every department of the city's tremendous corporate business. They will make expenditures amounting to a half million dollars each year. They will grant all contracts, name all employees for the responsible city positions . . . .. "

The idea expressed here as in other places is that now the voters must exercise more care and thought than ever before in choosing their city's councilmen.

Many of the candidates, either in answer to questions raised by the newspapers or because of their individual interest, published their views on city government by commission and expressed them from the platform. Chambers of commerce helped inform the people regarding the change in their government, citizens leagues and committees of one hundred were also active in this work. The commission government began under distinctly favorable conditions. A great number of voters looked forward with hope. This was partly due, of course, to the small single chamber council, but much was hoped for from the non-partisan ballot.

3. IS THE NON-PARTISAN BALLOT ACT CONSTITUTIONAL?

Does the law that provides for the use of the non-partisan ballot in city primaries and elections conflict with the Pennsylvania constitution?[48]

The courts of common pleas in Luzerne, Cambria, Clinton and Fayette counties were asked to answer this question.

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[48]The importance of this question to members of the League of Cities of the Third Class may be gauged by reading the following comment, which was made by one of them in their 1913 convention: "If the non-partisan ballot is declared unconstitutional, it certainly will disturb the method of electing the Commissioners under the Act, which in my opinion is one of the most important features of the Act because it eliminates and will eliminate for all time to come, the vicious system of politics that has prevailed in the third class cities of the State of Pennsylvania. If the Act itself is sustained upon this important subject, it will, in my judgment, be the means of driving

In Fayette county, Judge Van Swearingen held that the non-partisan feature of the Act was invalid. In stating his opinion he said:

"Applying this principle of construction to the provisions of the Constitution that all laws regarding the holding of elections by the citizens shall be uniform throughout the State, and to the prohibition that the general assembly shall not pass any local or special law for the opening and conducting of elections, in the light given by the decisions of the highest judicial tribunal of the State, we are without hesitation in holding as we now do, that the non-partisan ballot features contained in Article XII of the Act of June 27, 1913, (No. 367) are unconstitutional and void. We are of the opinion that those features of the Act do not constitute legislation regulating any of the Municipal affairs of cities of the third class, or relating to the corporate powers of cities of that class, or having respect to the number, character, powers or duties of the corporate officers thereof and that there are no such plain, natural, and necessary distinctions, or manifest peculiarities among the political sub-divisions of the State as will warrant the application of those features of the Act to cities of the third class and not to the other political sub-divisions, in the face of the constitutional provisions invoked against them. In addition to that, as already indicated, these non-partisan ballot features of the Act in no way relate to corporate or governmental functions, without relation to which classification cannot be sustained."[49]

As a result of this decision party ballots were used in 1913 in Connellsville, which is in Fayette county. The reasoning of the court in this case received the sanction of no other courts but at least one newspaper in the city of Connellsville seemed to approve of it.

The most notable and exhaustive opinion upholding the Act was given by Judge Strauss in Luzerne county. He said:

(Footnote continued)

politics out of the third class cities of the State of Pennsylvania; it will be the means of introducing a new system of government in Pennsylvania; it will be the means of establishing business principles of the highest order and the highest character in the administration of political affairs in Pennsylvania."

—Charles S. McHugh, City Solicitor of Wilkes Barre. Proceedings League of Cities of the Third Class, 1913, p. 9.

[49]Com. ex rel. Vannatta Vs. Fayette County Commissioners, 22 Pa. Dist. Rep. 654.

"An examination of the Act informs the reader that the legislature following recent and numerous experiments in other states relating to city government by a small body of men commonly referred to now-a-days by the phrase 'A commission form of government,' determined to apply the principle of such government to all the cities of the third class in this state. Every intelligent person who has given any, even slight attention to the matter, knows that thruout the country there has been general complaint that our city governments, even when honestly conducted, are inefficient; that, altho a city is in substance a business corporation invested with certain business duties involving the expenditure of large sums of money for street lighting and sanitation, road construction and cleansing, preservation of good order and law obedience, yet these duties have not been generally performed with such reasonable promptness, cheapness and completeness by cities as somewhat similar undertakings are accomplished by private corporations, or business men. Many causes have been assigned for this lack of efficiency, but chief among them are these two; the complexity of city government through double councils, multiplicity of councilmen and Mayor's vetoes; and the demoralizing effect of partisan politics with its rewards and punishments unnecessarily and therefore unwisely introduced into civic affairs."[50]

Judge Van Swearingen was quoted above as holding, in the only adverse Pennsylvania decision on the constitutionality of this Act, that the non-partisan ballot features "in no way relate to corporate or governmental functions, without relation to which classification cannot be sustained."

Judge Strauss on the same point of law said:

"But it is said non-partisan elections of councilmen in cities of the third class bear no relation to the regulation of affairs of cities of the third class as to corporate powers, or as to number, character, powers or duties of the officers and it is argued that as classification is justified only by necessity, unless there can be shown to be greater necessity for such legislation in third class cities than in other cities, the statute cannot be sustained. In fact it is well known that those who have given most attention to, and are most earnestly in favor of the commission form of government for cities, assert that its most essential feature ought to be freedom from party allegiance and control. Partisanship in municipal government undoubtedly

[50]Commonwealth ex rel. Kessler Vs. Moore et al. 61 P. L. J. 481. This opinion is quoted both because of the point of law involved and because of the attitude expressed regarding commission government within two months of the passage of the Clark Act. There was a very real note of progressivism in the political atmosphere in Pennsylvainia in 1913 that was quite extinct in 1919 when the non-partisan ballot was abolished. Of course this condition does not necessarily have anything to do with the merit of the non-partisan ballot.

operates adversely to good government in two ways; as already indicated, it may cause in an official allegiance to a party that might become stronger than his sense of allegiance to the welfare of the whole city; and again, it diverts attention of the voter from the municipal problem to the National problem. Undoubtedly, by the party system, frequently a candidate for mayor or councilman has been elected or defeated on the tariff, currency or some other National issue, whereas his election should have been won or lost upon a question of municipal finance, improvement or law enforcement.

"It is very commonly believed that a successful commission form of government, based on a partisan election, is a contradiction in terms."[51]

It is doubtless unnecessary to say that according to Judge Strauss, the non-partisan feature of the Clark Act is constitutional and does not conflict with "Article III, Section 7 of the Constitution prohibiting the passage of local or special laws for the opening or conducting of elections."[52]

Neither does the Act violate Article VIII, Section 7, which requires uniform election laws.

In commenting editorially on this decision, the editor of the "Gazette and Bulletin" said that it brought

" . . . considerable relief in Williamsport and the other third class cities of Pennsylvania.

"One of the strongest features of the Clark Law is its non-partisan ballot. Partisan politics should no more be allowed to enter into the election of city commissioners than should sentiment. It is purely a business proposition."[53]

The court in Cambria county upheld the non-partisan law in a decision[54] in which the adverse opinion of the Fayette county court was respectfully referred to, but not followed. The same is true of a decision rendered in Clinton county, where the court said in reply to the Fayette county court that,

" . . . While it is true that such classification cannot be made by indirection, or by classification resting upon no necessity nor reason of public policy, we are of the opinion that the public necessity for the Act under discussion is one which must be apparent to all men having the interest of good government at heart, and that the public

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[51]Ibid., p. 485.
[52]Ibid., p. 481.
[53]Aug. 27, 1913.
[54]Commonwealth ex. rel. Brown vs. Osborn et al. 61 P. L. J. 489.

necessity therefor is a matter which the legislature had the right to pass upon and one which under the circumstances should not now be disturbed by the court."[55]

Save in the case of the Fayette county court and for the reasons given above there was a general agreement in the other counties in which the question of constitutionality was raised that the non-partisan feature of the Clark Act did not contravene Article III, Section 7 of the state constitution forbidding the general assembly to pass any local or special laws "for the opening and conducting of elections." Neither did it conflict with Article VIII, Section 7, which requires that "all laws regulating the holding of elections by the citizens or for the registration of electors shall be uniform thruout the state." The supreme court of Pennsylvania did not pass upon the non-partisan ballot as applied to third class cities, but in the case of Winston vs. Moore. 244 Penna, 447, it held that the Act of July 24, 1913, P. L. 1001 which provided for the use of non-partisan ballot in the nomination and election of judges was constitutional. It was contended for the appellants that the Act was unconstitutional for two reasons.

1st.—Because it interfered with the freedom and equality of elections: and

2nd.—As applied to nominations for the office of judge, it was special legislation.[56]

In regard to the first point the court held that:

"...the declaration in the bill of rights that elections shall be free and equal means that the voter shall not be physicaly restrained in the exercise of his right of franchise by either Civil or Military authority, and that every voter shall have the same right as any other voter."[57]

It also held that:

"Uniform operation means that the same law shall apply to all persons placed in the same circumstances, and a law which operates upon every person who is a candidate for the office of Judge is uniform."[58]

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[55]Commonwealth vs. Clinton County Commissioners, 41 Pa. County Court Rep. 239. In the case of Commonwealth vs. Dickey, 61 P. L. J. 532 the decision was to the same effect.

[56]Winston vs. Moore, 244, Penna. 453.

[57]Ibid., p. 447.

[58]Ibid., p. 448.

Those who did not favor the non-partisan ballot did not succeed in having it thrown out by the courts for in 1915 and 1917 every city governed by the Clark Act used this type of ballot and all cities of the third class, but Connellsville, operated under it in 1913.

4. THE HISTORY OF THE NON-PARTISAN BALLOT IN THE LEGISLATURE

The Clark Act had been passed by the 1913 legislature and signed by the governor with little opposition and the non-partisan feature of it had attracted no particular notice. Those who had formulated the Clark Act had felt that the non-partisan election of the commissioners was quite essential to the most effective working of the system, and the 1913 legislature was in general agreement with them on this point as well as on the more dominant features of the new form of government.[59]

In 1919, however, the non-partisan feature of the Clark Act was repealed after a bitter fight, and one defeat. Naturally the question as to exactly why the repealer was passed arises. Was it passed at the wish of the third class cities themselves, or against their wishes? Did the party organization men champion the non-partisan ballot, or did they denounce it as a troublesome and inexpedient device?

The repealer was introduced by Sidney G. Willson, of Allegheny county. It was voted upon in the House on April 21st, and was defeated by a vote of 84 in favor of repeal and 94 against repeal. On May 5th, the vote was reconsidered and the measure passed; 109 votes were cast for repeal and 75 against. The bill reached the governor, but was then recalled for amendment; it was found that amendment was not necessary, and a second time the bill was sent to the executive who, in spite of his statements[60] made against repeal

[59]In 1919 and 1917 there were abortive attempts to repeal the non-partisan feature. However, the bosses had not accumulated sufficient strength as yet to carry the repealer in the face of the opposition of the great majority of the third class cities themselves.

[60]The proceedings of the League for 1919 contain a letter from Gov-

and notwithstanding the resolutions passed by city councils against repeal, and the protests of the League, finally signed the measure.

A detailed account of the debates in the House on the repealer will be found on pages 238-244 of the appendix.

The debates in the house revealed very clearly the stands of the two camps: that of the politician, more frequently not a citizen of a third class city; and that of the more progressive representatives of the third class cities themselves. Their arguments for and against the non-partisan ballot may be summarized in the following propositions.

Those who favored the repealer argued that:

(1) Since the party in the majority is held responsible for the management of city affairs, city officials ought to be picked along strict party lines. The non-partisan ballot is a blow at parties. "We believe in our political party as much as we believe in our church."

(2) The non-partisan ballot has failed to attract big men to public office, and it has let in the Socialists.

(3) Partisanship has not been eliminated from municipal elections.

(4) Minority factions rule the politics of the city.

(5) Inconvenience results from the use of more than one ballot.

The arguments in favor of the non-partisan ballot were that:

(1) The people in the majority of the cities of the third class were positively for the non-partisan ballot and against its repeal.

(2) A city councilman should be chosen because of his ability and without regard to his party affiliations.

(3) The non-partisan ballot is the democratic ballot and it makes for home rule; each man has a majority vote back of him.

(4) It prevents Socialists from securing office.

(5) It does not undermine the Republican party, but does make for progressive city government.

The League of Cities of the Third Class went definitely on record at each of its meetings from 1913 through 1918, as

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(Footnote continued)
ernor Sproul to James Gardiner of New Castle in which the governor says: "I will state to you right now that I am in favor of your 3rd class city bill in the shape that the committee drew it, and I am opposed to the elimination of the non-partisan feature." A member of the committee of the League conferring with Governor Sproul at Harrisburg quoted him as follows: "This repealer is a mistake, but damn it, they should not have put it up to me?" It is also interesting to note that the governor had been mentioned in the debates of the house as one who favored the non-partisan ballot in local elections.

favoring unconditionally the non-partisan feature of the Clark Act.[61]

Evidence on the actual passing of the repealer all points to a very definitely concerted "boss" program and course of action, that was finally successful, but successful only after a real spurt of subterranean political activity. One of the factors in the repeal that is most interesting and enlightening is the contrast between the April and May votes on the repealer.

The following chart shows the outstanding trends in the two votes taken.

	APRIL			MAY		
	For	Against	Not Voting	For	Against	Not Voting
The Democratic Vote	6	16	1	8	11	2
Representatives from Third Class Cities	6	16	8	12	16	3
Representatives from counties containing third class cities (excluding Pittsburgh and representatives from 3rd class cities)	27	27	6	34	21	5
Representatives from Allegheny county	22	2		23	1	
The Philadelphia Vote	16	18	3	22	14	3
Vote of representatives from counties containing no third class cities	15	23	16	26	17	11

This analysis was made in order to ascertain the answer to certain questions that naturally arise in considering the vote on the defeated and then victorious repealer. Where did the support for the repealer come from? How did the the representatives from the cities affected vote? How did the representatives from Philadelphia and Pittsburgh

[61]For correspondence and other opinion of the League on this point. see pages 245-247 of the appendix.

[62]An attempt was also made to find out why certain representatives, including three from third class cities voted against repeal on April 21st and for repeal on May 5th. Two of these representatives, from third class cities, however, have failed to answer this question.

vote? Did the representatives from the rural counties that contain no third class cities vote for or against repeal? There were 21 Democrats in the house—how did they vote? Is there a relationship between the operation of the non-partisan ballot in a certain city and the vote of that city's representatives?[62]

A glance at the preceding tabulation of votes shows that the only groups of those described that were clearly against the repealer each time it was voted on were groups composed of representatives from cities of the third class, and the group composed of Democrats. And these groups, moreover, were not as overwhelmingly against repeal as the Allegheny group was for repeal. In addition to the Allegheny group, representatives from counties containing third class cities (excluding representatives from third class cities and Pittsburgh), from Philadelphia, and from counties not containing third class cities, voted for repeal the second time the measure was voted on.

The first observation that one is likely to make regarding the groups that supported the repealer is that the least support came from that group which was most directly affected by the measure, and the greatest proportionate support came from the group that was most completely organized politically, and with the exception of one representative from McKeesport, only indirectly affected by the measure voted upon. If the non-partisan ballot was abolished because it failed to separate partisan politics from local elections and thereby secure the election of men because of their merit and record, and regardless of their national party affiliations, the facts cited above are difficult to explain. If, on the other hand, the non-partisan ballot was repealed largely because the party organization was opposed to it and in spite of the wishes of the people in the cities of the third class, the vote on the measure appears easily understandable.

In trying to secure additional evidence as to why the non-partisan ballot was repealed, letters were written to those members of the legislature that debated the measure, and

to those members that changed their votes—that is, those who voted against repeal on April 21st, and for repeal on May 5th. Different members of the legislature and other persons who had closely followed the 1919 legislative session of Pennsylvania were interviewed. Some of these men failed to answer either of the two letters sent to them. A good many of the men who did answer said that they had forgotten the whole affair; others dealt in generalities; but a few of the legislators fully remembered the passage of the repealer, and described the forces back of it, both concisely and clearly.[63] No matter how great the divergence of views expressed in the legislature regarding the reasons for repeal, the tenor of their letters was substantially the same The evidence all seemed to point to one general reason for repeal, and that was the hostility of the party organization to the ballot. The party leaders were annoyed by it and they killed it. This seems to be the concensus of opinion both among those who favor the non-partisan idea and among many of those who oppose it and are yet willing to talk about the actual repeal.

The fact that in 1919 the old guard of the legislature was able to do what it would have been unable to do in 1913 was due chiefly to the difference in personnel and general tone between the 1913 and 1919 legislatures. The 1913 legislature came in on a wave of progressivism that was the veritable Zeitgeist of the times.[64] But by 1919 the progressives were either gone, had become indifferent to the non-partisan ballot, or were thinking about something else. The non-partisan ballot had not proved itself to be 100 percent perfect, and the party organization men who had always been hostile to it, felt that by 1919 they could take it from the people without suffering any dire results. The lull of indifference that almost inevitably follows every progressive and liberal victory was upon the people; they were no longer on the alert, nor was the opposition sufficiently organized to com-

[63]The texts of the letters of these men will be found on pages 247-249 of the appendix.

[64]Writer's manuscript, Political Pennsylvania in 1913 and 1919.

bat the mighty power of the old guard once it was in action.[65]

These comments and conclusions about the repeal measure may serve as a background against which may be placed the essential facts of a letter that the writer received from one who was directly and most intimately associated with the actual abolishing of the non-partisan ballot by the legislature.[66]

"The repealer was introduced at the request of Hon. James F. Woodward, of McKeesport. Up to the time that the measure was finally voted upon and defeated, it was in charge of Sidney G. Willson, of McKeesport. After the bill failed of passage on April 21st, Senator Penrose, who at that time had his headquarters at the Penn Harris hotel in Harrisburg, sent for Hon. J. H. Simpson of the House, and asked him to take charge of the bill and restore it to the calendar. It was then restored and finally passed by the House and Senate, and signed by Governor Sproul."

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[65]Apart from these general reasons for the success of the repealer, there were certain interesting specific reasons why some organization men wanted to abolish the non-partisan ballot at this time.

First, in the City of McKeesport, a Socialist, Singleton Neiser, who was also a minister of the Gospel, succeeded in getting elected to council on two different occasions while the non-partisan ballot was used. He proved to be a "thorn in the side of the Republican organization" and since party men felt certain that he could never receive sufficient votes to secure nomination on the Republican ticket at a party primary it naturally followed that the non-partisan ballot must go.

A second reason for repeal at this time was to test the strength of the members in the House for the non-partisan system, as certain organization men wanted the non-partisan ballot abolished in judicial elections. In the words of one member of the House, "The reason for the repeal of the judicial non-partisan bill was to allow Sproul to nominate Sadler on the Supreme Bench, thereby receiving the endorsement of the Republican organization in the state, which would and did insure his election, but running on a non-partisan ballot, he would have had opposition at the general election and probably been defeated."

[66]The writer of this letter is definitely and positively opposed to the non-partisan ballot. His willingness to tell the inside story of the repeal supplied one of the surprises of this investigation. The writer believes this letter to be absolutely dependable.

II.

OPINION AS TO THE NON-PARTISAN PRIMARY AND ELECTION

A positive effort was made to secure the opinion of persons apt to have definite reactions to the non-partisan system. The method of approach was threefold; questionnaire surveys, examinations of newspaper files, and personal interviews. Naturally this method is open to attack, but unfortunately, in view of the nature of the problem, the writer knows of no alternative method that is not open to attack. Prejudice and bias color much of the evidence. Yet this source of material is significant and great care has been taken to present all points of view and the opinions of varied groups of men.

The different groups written to were those most likely to have had some direct contact with the non-partisan ballot. To the great majority of individuals outside of these special classes this electoral device was one of those things that did not matter, or was long since forgotten.

In this present chapter, will be given the views of those men that were elected to a municipal office[1] in which this ballot was used. Next the writer will present the reaction of candidates that were nominated under the non-partisan system and defeated at the election. The third set of questionnaires was secured from those individuals that were definitely interested in political campaigns in which the non-partisan ballot was used. Many of these men were elected to some partisan office and they had an excellent opportunity to observe the working of the non-partisan ballot altho they were elected under another system. The views of the members of the Republican and Democratic state committees are next presented. The files of a number of newspapers for the period of 1913-1923 have been examined, and the attitude of the press concerning the

[1]City commission, mayor or controller.

non-partisan ballot is given next. This material is further supplemented with letters and questionnaires received from editors. A survey was also made of the chambers of commerce in cities of the third class, and the results of this attempt to sound out the opinion of a non-partisan ballot are given. The following section is devoted to a number of interviews that the writer had with local politicians and others who had some special knowledge of the operation of the non-partisan ballot in one or more cities. The final section is somewhat in the nature of a round table discussion on the merits and defects of the non-partisan system. Those who favor this ballot consider the objections that the partisans have made to it, and the partisans have an opportunity to critically examine the arguments advocated for this system by its friends.

1. THE VIEW OF ELECTED OFFICIALS.

The candidates for the offices of mayor, city commissioners and city controller that were elected while the non-partisan ballot was used, and those candidates that were elected under both systems, the nonpartisan one that was abolished and the present partisan system, form a class of men who probably know more about the actual operation of the non-partisan ballot than any other group.[2] Because of their desire for office and their practical experience in one or more political campaigns these candidates, or many of them, have definite and intimate information concerning the defects and advantages inherent in a non-partisan system of municipal elections. They may not see nor understand the significance of all of the facts in a given political campaign; perhaps they see none of the aspects of a primary or an election in an objective fashion. However, these candidates are likely to have an impression that is a realistic one, and it will have been evolved out of actual political experi-

[2]Certain political figures that directed the moves of some of the candidates and largely determined the character of a number of campaigns, and unsuccessful candidates ought to be included in this classification.

ences. Their picture of the non-partisan ballot will be largely colored by their own desires, hopes and disappointments and they will see it in relation to their own fortunes and not in relation to the general good of the community. Notwithstanding the qualifications that one must keep in mind in considering the opinion of candidates on this subject, the writer believes that evidence of the sort gathered from these officials is of definite value. The great majority of people inevitably see an election system in the light of their own interest. If that interest is so broad that it takes in the general community, it is often so thin or weak that anything as colorless as an election, or surely a non-partisan ballot escapes them entirely. This opinion of a candidate is a political fact for the student of politics to work with just as a number or a statute are political facts. If this evidence is tinged with prejudice, the prejudice will not always be the same shade, for the candidates are often from the Republican, Democratic and Socialist parties; some are independent of all party connections, some belong to the majority and some the minority party; some again have been elected one, two or three times under the non-partisan system; others have been elected to office under both the non-partisan and the partisan systems, and still others have run for office under the non-partisan system and failed to be elected. Each one of these candidates has some first hand knowledge concerning Pennsylvania's experience with the non-partisan ballot in municipal primaries and elections.

The writer sent a letter and a questionnaire to the candidates in 23 cities[3] of the third class of Pennsylvania, that had been elected to the office of either mayor, city controller or

[3]There were 246 candidates elected to office in these cities between the years of 1913 and 1919 and in 1925 59 of them were dead or had moved away to some place unknown to the writer. (Probably all but five of the 59 are dead). One hundred and eighty-seven candidates received the letter and the questionnaire and 47 of this number replied. Five of these candidates were definitely opposed to the non-partisan ballot and 35 were just as clearly in favor of it; the other seven that replied were uncertain. They expressed an opinion that was neither for nor against the non-partisan ballot. In some cases, they thought it made no difference; in other instances they said voting machines were needed.

city commissioner during the period of 1913 to 1919 while the non-partisan ballot was being used. One fourth of the candidates that received this inquiry made some concrete attempt to answer it. This group of candidates was asked to describe the operation of the non-partisan ballot in their own cities; to tell to what extent candidates were chosen because of their personal ability and standing in the community; and to what extent they were chosen because of their affiliation with a national party. About half of those that answered gave their opinion of the non-partisan system without answering the questionnaire that was sent with the letter.

Some of these former candidates and office holders that are opposed to the non-partisan system gave the following reasons for their opposition to this type of ballot.

A business man and president of a brick company, who was elected to the Monongahela city council in 1913 said that the non-partisan ballot never appealed to him and that it was not successful in their city politics for it enabled a great many sore-head politicians to get into their party. He then confidently added.

"We now have one of the best systems in politics we have ever had. Our Rotary club has ironed out a great many of the political issues. We have a membership of about thirty, made up of our best business men. We also have a community club made up of about 65 energetic young business men, who work in harmony with the Rotary club. They are out for a good business administration and we have practically weeded out the dead-head politicians from our community. We have at the present time about three Republicans to one Democrat voter in our community, but have a Democrat mayor, one Democrat representative in council and one Democrat representative on the school board."[4]

A real estate man in McKeesport who has spent 29 years in public life and who was elected mayor in 1913, 1917 and again in 1921 finds that candidates who are launched forth by a political party and who "therefore, are obligated to that party are much better officials than those who have no party responsibility."[5]

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[4]Letter to writer, April, 1926.

[5]Letter to writer, March, 1926. This candidate is a Republican and has had practical experience with both types of ballots.

An insurance agent in Carbondale, who was twice elected mayor, thinks that there is no difference in value between partisan and non-partisan ballots in local elections, and then adds, "I prefer the present system of partisan ballot from the standpoint of economy and efficiency."[6]

A civil engineer and business man of Johnstown is of the opinion that his city is so predominately Republican that anyone not affiliated with the Republican party has very little chance of election on any type of ballot.[7] The same idea was expressed by candidates in Pottsville and Lebanon.

A lawyer in Erie who was elected to council in 1917 thinks that the non-partisan ballot is all right in theory, but it is of no value in practice because politicians are not honest.[8]

A chief time-keeper of a steel company in Lebanon who was elected controller in 1915, 1919, and 1923 says, after having had experience with both types of ballots, that there is no difference between them, "for, while the city is largely Republican, yet under both systems Democrats are at times elected, at present we have a Democratic mayor and one councilman."[9]

More than two-thirds of the group that answered the letter of inquiry regarding the non-partisan ballot favored it.

An independent Republican in Chester who is a real estate dealer there and who was elected to council in both 1917 and 1919 definitely favors the non-partisan ballot because it enables all factions regardless of party to support a strong independent candidate against the gang or ring. It helps liberals and independents unite on a favorable candidate, whereas, their strength would be divided if this same candidate were to run under party colors.[10] He thought it cost more money to run for office in Chester on a party bal-

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[6]Letter to writer, May, 1926. This letter is from one who has been elected to office under both types of ballot and one who is a Democrat.

[7]However, this candidate is a Democrat and he was elected to the city council in 1913. Letter to writer, April, 1926.

[8]Letter to writer, March, 1926. This candidate is a Democrat.

[9]Letter to writer, December, 1925. This candidate is a Republican.

[10]Letter to writer, March, 1925.

lot than on a non-partisan ballot. This is doubtless due to the fact that he is a non-organization man.

This view was also held by another candidate who was elected to council in Chester in 1917. He thought that the party organization supported its candidate in that city in the same way that they had done before, and there was no difference in the cost to the candidate in running for office under the two systems, and that whenever a candidate of a minority group must run under his own party banner, he is at a disadvantage. He added that he could not describe Chester's experience with the non-partisan ballot in a letter but he would gladly explain and illustrate it to the writer in person.[11]

Two other former Chester councilmen who were elected under the non-partisan ballot thought that a minority party candidate had a better chance of election when the non-partisan ballot was used, for this system tended to make the voters think of the man and not the party.

The owner of a greenhouse who is a Democrat and who was twice elected to council in Lebanon while the non-partisan ballot was used there writes that,

> "There are so many reasons why I favor the non-partisan ballot that it would be hard for me to state all of them, but the very best reason is the fact that you can get better men all through to run for office, and elect them, on the ballot. The reason for this is, they owe no allegiance to any party, organization or faction and on a non-partisan ballot voters forget party and lose their partisanship and will vote for one of the other party; whereas, on a strict party ticket they will vote their party ticket no matter who is on the ticket. Then, again, if you have a city, county or state that is overwhelmingly one-sided, a minority man has no chance at all on a party ticket. The consequence of this condition is graft, corruption and log-rolling and everything that should not be, but will never be changed, for your politician would not want it and we are so steeped in party politics that nothing outside of a miracle could change it."[12]

A member of the 1913 Lebanon council who is a Republican and the treasurer of a printing company is quite certain that he owes his position in the public service to the

[11]Letter to writer, March, 1925.
[12]Letter to writer, May, 1926.

non-partisan ballot:

"Never being active in politics, I could not have been elected on a straight political basis . . . I cannot help but feel that this non-partisan commission council for cities of the third class is an advantage, for the reason that people can select men who are qualified for the position regardless of whether they are Republican or Democrat, or anything else, which they cannot do under the old political regime, in which case they elect men because they are strong politicians regardless of qualifications."[13]

A dentist who is a Republican and who was elected to the Corry council in 1917 thinks municipal officials can best be chosen on a non-partisan ballot, for men are then "elected on account of their reputation and standing in the community and that their political affiliations have very little, if any, influence."

He then adds a qualifying statement that merits careful consideration:

"However, I am doubtful if this would work out so well in larger cities, as the men seeking office could not be so well known and the voters would be at sea and quite as likely to vote for the weak men as for the able ones . . . Of course if they know very little about the capabilities of any of the candidates as is usually the case, a majority still continue to vote the straight party ticket."[14]

A Republican contractor in Corry who was four times elected to the city council there, three of which times were on the non-partisan ballot, is opposed to the use of party ballots in local primaries and elections because many people stick close to their party regardless of the qualification of the party candidate. They "are afraid of spoiling ballots, so vote it straight."[15]

Two other councilmen elected under the non-partisan ballot in Corry also favor this type of ballot,[16] for it gives the power of electing officials to the people. In the words of one of them who is a Republican and the president of a manufacturing company, the non-partisan ballot "does away with the selection of ward politicians and ward heelers, who tried

[13]Letter to writer, April, 1926.
[14]Letter to writer, February, 1926.
[15]Letter to writer, March, 1926.
[16]Letter to writer, April, 1926.

to dominate the election of their particular candidates irrespective of their fitness."

A Democrat and anti-organization man who is a successful merchant and who was elected mayor of Corry in 1913 is a positive supporter of the non-partisan ballot and thinks that there is no argument whatsoever against this system of municipal elections.

"I was first to be elected as mayor in this city on such a ticket and during my term of office party lines were completely obliterated. . . . What can be more gratifying than being able to run city affairs as you would your own and not have any strings tied to your system?

"I was invited to attend a public get together caucus and to my surprise although coming in late and only able to get in the door and then only able to stand found the nomination ready to be tendered me. I was urged to go to the platform and in my blunt manner of speech I did not accept, but plain as words could make it I wanted a few days in which to consider, closing with the remark that I thought would surely create a great deal of opposition among the old ward heelers; but to my surprise it worked out just the reverse. It was this—should I agree to accept your kind offer, let no man come to me for pre-election promises for the man does not live regardless of what he might do in my behalf that can place me under any obligations to him or his friends. This frank and plain declaration was a factor which led to an overwhelming victory, and left me to my own discretion in making appointments and decisions. You see in place of them coming to me with instructions, I went to them for opinions and I could choose the source and I got the best unbiased opinions.

"Those councilmen who were elected by promises at the same election certainly had their troubles while I soon had smooth sailing in a clear sky, and the city could not help but profit by it. In my opinion it is a great political mistake to again return to crooked partisanship elections in any state for in one way you vote for the ability of the men who have proven a success in their own affairs and thus capable of handling city affairs as they did their own. . . . I sincerely hope that some day not far distant that the great state of Pennsylvania again returns to the non-partisan election or that I live in a state which has it."[17]

A railroad conductor who is a Democrat and who was twice elected controller in Bradford writes after having had experience with both types of ballots that he is in hearty accord with any law that would restore the non-partisan feature to the Clark Act:

"We in Bradford found the Clark Act (before amended) all that

[17]Letter to writer, March, 1926.

could be desired. We were able to get better and more capable men to run for the different offices and had less trouble to elect these same men, and when elected they were not dominated by some political boss and they had to answer only to the citizens that elected them. Of course, some voters were guided by the politics of the candidates, but we found here that the great majority of the people voted for the best qualified candidate and not for the party."[18]

This view is also held by an insurance agent who was elected to the Bradford council in 1917. He said in part:

"I first answered the questions, and am enclosing them herewith, but upon second reading of your letter I concluded to add some of my impressions on the subject of non-partisan balloting in local elections, particularly in this little city of Bradford. Looking at the matter from one standpoint—that our form of government is that of parties, and therefore it seems proper to have party responsibility as to the government meted out by officials — in localities where party spirit does not run too high, and where candidates of any party in order to get support at the polls must measure up well in character, ability, etc., one might easily be satisfied with partisan nominations. However, when a party nomination makes certain an election, then the non-partisan method is the more to be preferred, and as this is usually true, I favor the non-partisan method in local matters . . .

"The non-partisan method in this city worked well, and during that time elections were because of fitness, character, experience, etc., and not because of affiliation with any political party. I think the method should not have been changed, and would be glad to see a return to it for it surely makes for better local government when the official holds himself responsible to the people as a whole, and therefore cannot hope so much to have his party stand back of him and probably re-elect him, no matter what his official conduct may have proven to be."[19]

A well driller who was elected to the Uniontown council under both systems writes the single sentence, "I am very much in favor of non-partisan ballot in local elections."[20] A butcher who is a Republican and who was elected to the Uniontown council in the non-partisan period believes that

" . . . the political organization that controlled politics in the county and city elected their ticket with the same ease as they did under the partisan ballot, however, we think they were compelled to select a better class of men for the office to be filled."[21]

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[18]Letter to the writer, March, 1926.
[19]Letter to writer, May, 1926.
[20]Letter to writer, April, 1926. This official is a Republican.
[21]Letter to writer, June, 1926.

A contractor who is a Republican and who was three times elected to the McKeesport city council hesitates in answering the writer's letter for he is now three thousand miles from Pennsylvania and he does not want to get entangled or mixed up in any controversy politically.

"However, I can't help but say that the non-partisan ballot was a great improvement for better conditions than before it came into existence and that it has been a loss to the people since it has come under the old political organizations again."[22]

A physician in York who is a Republican and who was three times elected to council believes that better qualified men were elected on the non-partisan ballot than are now elected on a partisan ballot. This idea is also held by a sign painter in York who is a Democrat and who was three times elected to council, once under the non-partisan plan and twice under the party system. This latter official adds that the writer's letter

" . . . brought to my mind fond recollections of the non-partisan style of electing councilmen to office in cities of the size of York, say about 65,000 population. It is my firm belief the best and most good can come from such elections where all the people can vote for candidates they wish at the primaries, regardless of their party affiliations; but the politicians at Harrisburg saw fit to change the system back to party lines for back home purpose, as it was thought that it might be more healthy to control the elections on straight party lines."[23]

A dentist who is a Republican and who was two times elected to the Pottsville council under the non-partisan system and twice under the present party method greatly prefers the former system for nominating and electing city officials. In fact he writes that it is,

" . . . the backbone of any nation and more particularly any municipality where local conditions govern. . . . The success of any town or city depends on choosing the better men for its executives regardless of party affiliations. I use as a comparison my own small inland city of the third class where lately one party controls all the offices and we have indeed a sorry spectacle of business efficiency and one man domination; in fact it is a rubber stamp affair and in

[22]Letter to writer, March, 1926.
[23]Letter to writer, April, 1926.

its blundering way stamps perfectly but works selfishly. . . . No one party, whether majority or minority, has a monopoly on brains and all must admit, no matter what political faith he embraces, that brains and discretion are a very important part of any individual's makeup where he occupies public office. Leave us therefore select and elect the man of talent as our leader and executive, for service is required much more than patronage to make a community a success."[24]

To an accountant who was elected to the Titusville council in 1917, there is only one type of ballot for use in local elections. He believes that

" . . . the non-partisan ballot is the only method by which men of standing can be elected to office in municipalities. I was very much surprised when this law was repealed, but after consideration I see the politician did not want it (I mean the Republican) as it interfered with the organization in general. The present city administration is entirely Republican and I doubt very much if a Democrat of standing could be elected without great expense to himself. To sum up the situation as it now stands, it is all politics in every way."'[25]

The fact that certain officials were chosen on a party ballot at the same election at which other officials were chosen on a non-partisan ballot is given as one reason why the non-partisan system failed in Pennsylvania to separate partisan politics from local elections.

A Republican who is a contractor and who was elected to the Johnstown council in 1917 writes that

"The system in actual practice worked very fine after the final election was over and the officials were sworn in. Up until that time the experiment was getting to be an expensive one for the individual candidate, as well as a very uncertain one. What I mean by uncertain, is this—while we were going through the experiment in Johnstown, city officials and judges were the only candidates who were elected on the non-partisan ballot; all other county officials were elected in the usual way. . . . This made it possible for the aspirant who was friendly with the majority party organization to get the support of the organization workers, which gave him an advantage over his competitor. Notwithstanding this support from the organ-

[24]Letter to writer, April, 1926. This statement of faith in the non-partisan ballot is especially interesting when considered in the light of this official's experience with it and with party ballots. He adds: "The choice of the people always had the preference at the non-partisan ballot. For example: I was elected twice under this system without any trouble. Just as soon as the partisan laws were passed, I was elected with a great deal of trouble, not being a party man."

[25]Letter to writer, April, 1926.

ization it was not held responsible in any way for the candidate's action after his election. This was one of the chief arguments used to repeal the Act. I believe personally the non-partisan method could be made a good one if the Act could be drawn so as to include all officials, state and county."[26]

A newspaper publisher who is a Republican and who was elected to the Carbondale council during the non-partisan period decidedly believes that

" . . . a non-partisan law would result in the election in third class cities of abler men from both the major parties who cannot now be elected because they have no time or inclination for party politics."[27]

A civil engineer in Hazleton who is a Republican and who was elected to his city's council in 1913 is absolutely for the non-partisan ballot in local elections for he believes that it helped in the election of more capable men than are now elected in Hazleton under the partisan ballot.

"For the following reasons: By being nominated and elected by the people regardless of political party, makes the councilmen and mayor more independent of political 'bosses,' and groups of so-called 'politicians'; also caused the voters to think of the man and his record, instead of party, and resulted in the nomination of eight men picked with more care than by partisan ballot. From the eight men nominated, four good capable men were always elected in our city. The same result prevailed in the mayor nominations and elections."

This former official adds one word of caution. If the non-partisan ballot is used in cities that

" . . . grow to a voting population of over about 20,000, the candidates are not well known by the people, and then the selection will not be nearly so good, and the candidates will fall more into the hands of 'politicians' because these men will have a better chance to influence the voters in making a choice, and, we will be in pretty much the same position and condition we are now in under the partisan ballot."

A Republican anti-organization man who is an accountant with a fine reputation and who was three times[28] elected to the New Castle council writes,

"I have always been in favor of the non-partisan system. This city

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[26]Letter to writer, April, 1926.
[27]Letter to writer, 1926.
[28]He was elected once under this system and twice under the partisan system.

tried it for a few years after the year 1913 and then went back to the party system. Under both systems good men have been elected to office and no fault can be found with either system. While we have the party system in name we have the non-partisan system in practice. What I mean by that is, if the major party does not put the right kind of a man in at the nomination, the voters at the election will vote for the other fellow, if he is all right. This county is strong Republican, but within the past eight years the Democrats have elected to office a sheriff, a district attorney, a judge, and a city treasurer because the Republicans did not heed the handwriting on the wall."[29]

The widow of one who was described as a "small clothing merchant" speaks for this official in the following words:

"Mr. X was very much in favor of this form of ballot. This part of the state and especially New Castle is overwhelmingly Republican. Mr. X was a life long Democrat and never could have been elected on his ticket but on the non-partisan was elected by a large majority. Many voters will not vote for candidates out of their party, but on the non-partisan ticket the best man regardless of party may be elected and were in a number of instances here. When Mr. X was elected mayor, the candidates were one Democrat, several Republicans and one Socialist. The nomination went to one Democrat and one Republican and the Socialist came out independently. In the election the Democrat won with a large majority. . . . Party did not seem to enter. In this community, I believe the non-partisan ballot was popular, but was changed back for what reason I really don't know."[30]

A newspaper editor who is a Democrat and who was four times elected to the Erie council, twice under each system, writes,

" . . . that personally believe it would be more satisfactory to select city officials on a non-partisan basis, as then the mayor and councilmen would feel that in making appointments they could make selections without offending the party organization which brought about nominations and elections.

"However, I want to say to you that party partisanship in Erie has not developed to any great extent. Our citizens have selected their mayor and councilmen on a non-partisan basis by candidates filing nomination papers for both the Republican and Democratic nominations. Our present mayor obtained both nominations and the undersigned has twice been the nominee of both parties. At the last election, two of our council candidates obtained both nominations. The special session of the legislature had a bill prohibiting a candidate from seeking both nominations. If such a bill is passed then the partisan form of government in cities of the third class may become

[29]Letter to writer, March, 1926.
[30]Letter to writer, March, 1926.

intense."[31]

A Harvard graduate[32] who is a lawyer and who was once elected mayor in Meadville under the non-partisan system and once under the partisan system made the following statement concerning elections in his city:

"In the first place, I am distinctly prejudiced in favor of this non-partisan ballot. I cannot say that I believe the candidates chosen under the non-partisan ballot were of better standing or of more ability than those chosen under party rule. Under the present custom of party elections in this city, both candidates usually get a nomination by both parties on account of their petitions filed. I do not believe that the candidates here during the non-partisan time were chosen on account of their party affiliations. In small towns party affiliations in town elections do not count for as much as personal popularity.

"My experience has been here, and I have had many years of it, that the voters in voting for town officials do not usually consider personal ability, standing in the community or party affiliation. They usually vote for the man that is the most popular, or that has the strongest body of supporters aiming at his elections, or the one that spends the most money.

Under the non-partisan ballot, the majority of candidates elected, I think were supported by the party organizations belonging to the party of the successful candidate. The cost of running for office is about the same.

"I am prejudiced in favor of the non-partisan ballot in town elections for the reason that it seems to be the common sense way of electing people to govern your town. The qualifications of a good candidate for a town office should not be how he stands on party principles, but what he knows about city finances, paving, sewering and other municipal activities which should qualify one for an official position in a municipality."[33]

Four other officials were written to because of their particular interest in municipal government, and their replies will now be considered. None of these four happen to live in any of those twenty-two cities in which all of the other non-partisan candidates written to lived.

A Reading paint manufacturer who is a Progressive Republican describes his attitude regarding the non-partisan ballot in the following words:

"The non-partisan ballot for use in third class cities during the elections held from 1913 to 1919 inclusive, in my opinion, achieved the

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[31]Letter to writer, March, 1926.
[32]He is also a Republican.
[33]Letter to writer, April, 1925.

purpose for which the law was enacted, and in every instance resulted in the election of persons of better average qualifications than would have been the case under partisan elections. In my own campaigns for instance, I used newspaper and placard advertising, but I attribute most of my success to personal appeals made to electors of all parties. Some candidates used all the methods mentioned in your second question,[34] but in all cases care was taken to avoid partisan appeals. Of course, some methods appeal more strongly than others. In the 1913 election, for example, a clique of about ten persons constituted themselves a so-called Citizens Committee and attempted to slate two Democrats and two Republican candidates selected from a certain fraternal body of which the ten committeemen were members, and appealed to support the candidates of their choice. To offset this action I immediately announced my candidacy as one of independent views, capable of "paddling my own canoe" and accordingly had a large placard printed with myself seated in a canoe named 'The Public Welfare' and paddling up a stream filled with rocks inscribed variously as graft and other obstructions to good government, and steering clear of said rocks. This seemed to strike the people favorably and I was elected by a large majority over the slated candidates. . . . Where political organizations attempted to support certain members of their party as against other candidates of the same party, such secretly supported candidates were in most cases defeated by the vote of independent members of the party as a rebuke to the partisan politicians. Such factors as class, wealth, race, religion, volunteer fire department, etc., appeared to be lost sight of in the interest of public welfare. The successful candidates during these six years as a rule showed themselves far more capable from every viewpoint than did those elected before that time or since the repeal of the non-partisan ballot laws.

"There is not the slightest doubt in my mind that all communities will derive far better government from elections held along non-sectional, non-political and non-sectarian lines, than is possible under partisan elections. . . . Of course, my experiences are the result of 70 years of residence in this city, and may therefore be exceptional, because of my connection with the Reading School District as a controller for over 20 years, before I became a candidate for city council, to which office I was elected for three successive terms during the 1913-1919 non-partisan election period."[35]

In reply to a later and more definite question asked regarding the non-partisan ballot, this official wrote,

"I wish to state most emphatically that I do give that form of balloting credit not only for my election, but I believe the same can be said for the other candidates elected with me, whether their party af-

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[34]In what ways did the candidates appeal to the voters for support at the polls? 1. Newspaper advertising? 2. Placard or bill board advertising? Printed handbills? 4. Personal letters? 5. Rally or mass meeting? 6. Brass bands, parades? 7. Campaign buttons?

[35]Letter to writer, March, 1924.

filiations were previously Democratic or Republican.."[36]

The president of a hardware company in Easton also believes in the non-partisan ballot. He writes:

"I am a Republican in politics, and to a very great extent, an organization man, although in local matters do not follow strict party lines, as I believe fitness and qualifications are paramount to all else in men in public office.

"I am a strong believer in the non-partisan nomination and election for municipal offices and for the judiciary. And believe a step backwards was made in Pennsylvania when the non-partisan law was repealed at the behest, and probable understanding with powers that be in 'payment' or 'exchange' for support to other measures.

"The strong partisan and strong organization man as a rule is not in favor of the non-partisan plan. The claim is that not sufficient interest is taken in the campaigns as there is 'nothing to fight for as an inducement.' Yet I believe that many who decry small politics and who do not under partisan plan, register or vote, took greater interest in the non-partisan. Oftimes candidates of little merit must be voted for at the primaries on a partisan ballot, when otherwise a qualified candidate on the opposite ticket may be beaten at the primaries and the voter cannot vote for the man of his choice. If more voters could be interested under partisan plan and work for the nomination of the right man, and if less partisanship was manifest in municipal and civic affairs, better men—men who worked for the welfare and not for personal gain, better conditions would exist. . . .

"I might say that I served as city controller for eight years, part of which was non-partisan and part otherwise. I believe in the non-partisan ballot for municipal elections."[37]

A Socialist who was once a glass blower and who is now a contractor and who was twice elected to the Allentown council while the non-partisan ballot was used declares that,

" . . . the law really did separate us from partisan politics. Men were elected repeatedly to office under this law who were promptly defeated on partisan ballots in later elections. As for judges, the same result was seen. The Republican party under the Sproul administration repealed the law solely for the reason that it did effectively disrupt partisan political machines. This is the best evidence of the effectiveness of the 'non-partisan law'."[38]

A lawyer describes his experience in municipal politics,

"I am no longer a councilman of the city of Wilkes Barre under the

[36]Letter to writer, April, 1925. This official was a candidate for city council in the Republican primary in 1919, but he failed to secure his party's nomination and was not elected.

[37]Letter to writer, March, 1924.

[38]Letter to writer, February, 1924.

commission form of government. I served two two-year terms as such under the non-partisan method of nomination and election, the first term 1914-1915, the second term 1918-1919. In 1919 I was a candidate for mayor under the partisan method and received the Republican nomination by a large majority but was defeated by my Democratic opponent in a Republican town. In 1923 the same thing happened again with the same opponent. Both defeats were by small majorities. I do not believe that the non-partisan method would have made any difference in either election, although it is possible it would have done so as I was in neither case favored by the machine element. In the selection of councilmen I do not believe that we would have had any better results, under the non-partisan method during the past four or five years. A Democrat was elected by Republican votes two years ago and is quite impartial in his appointments. In the election of judges, I do not think there would have been any difference if the non-partisan method had been retained. Judge Woodward was elected ten years ago by the non-partisan platform, being a Democrat in a normally Republican county. He was again elected, receiving both nominations, in the year 1923. . . .

"I am very decidedly in favor of non-partisan method for municipalities and the judicial nomination and election, but it appears to be more a theoretical than a practical difference. I very greatly prefer running on a non-partisan platform.

"In both my campaigns the chairman of the Republican city committee was against me personally, and I have had to accept him as my campaign manager, altho I had a separate organization as well."[39]

Men Elected Under Both Types of Ballots

Fifty-nine letters were sent to officials who had been elected to office under both the non-partisan and the partisan ballot. Forty-seven of those that received letters did not answer them. Of those that expressed an opinion, two were opposed to the non-partisan ballot, two thought it made no difference in the type of men elected and eight were in favor of it. Those in favor of it, in this instance, were more positive in their attitude than those who opposed it. Representative letters follow. A postmaster in Franklin who has three times been elected mayor, first says,

" . . . that the present system of primaries is not very much of an

[39]Letter to writer, January, 1924. Residents of Wilkes Barre have told the writer that certain groups there want a wide open town, or at least, they do not want the lid on too tight, and so they defeated the writer of the above letter who was too much of a church man. His successful opponent was described as a roue, a good after dinner speaker and a hearty hand shaker, but with no other ability.

improvement on the old method of nominating candidates by convention."

and then he discusses the question asked by writing,

"It is going to be a very hard matter to have a non-partisan expression as I believe that there should always be two or more parties in the field, especially so in state and national affairs, and it would be impossible to segregate local affairs from more or less partisanship. When only one faction is represented and becomes powerful a tendency for that faction is to abuse the trust that is placed in them. And where two parties are functioning there is more of an effort on the part of the one in power to be good for self-protection, if for no other reason."[40]

A member of the Republican city organization of Titusville who is also a manufacturer of cutlery writes:

"I can see little or no difference between a local partisan or non-partisan election. . . . Being an organization man, I naturally should lean that way. It is of material assistance because the organization does the work that the candidate ordinarily must do for himself, and whether it be one or the other, one must work to gain an election. The man who sits back and says, 'If they want me, they will elect me' usually finds out that he is not wanted.

"I think the non-partisan idea does have a tendency to bring out a better class of candidates for the offices, but having no organization behind them, they are frequently defeated."[41]

A Republican who is a coal merchant and who was twice elected city controller of Harrisburg writes that he

" . . . did not care for the non-partisan ballot, although men were chosen with more ability and better morals than are now chosen on a party ticket. We have gang control here. If we had the devil on the Republican ticket here, two colored wards, the seventh and eighth, would elect him. I lost my third term for city controller by twenty votes lost by these two wards."[42]

The opinion of one commissioner from Franklin has been cited; he is opposed to the non-partisan ballot. Two other commissioners have written that they favor it. From one who was twice elected under the non-partisan system and once under the partisan system, we hear that

"In Franklin, the voters of the Republican ticket are in a large majority, and it has been shown frequently that voters stick pretty

[40]Letter to writer, December, 1925.
[41]Letter to writer, December, 1925.
[42]Letter to writer, January, 1926.

closely to the party ticket. With the non-partisan ballot, we were able, several times, to elect an exceedingly good man to council, but at the first party election this same man was defeated on the Democratic ticket, simply because enough voters would not split their tickets. This is one point in favor of the non-partisan ballot for municipalities, for this one reason."[43]

The third letter from Franklin is similar to this second and favorable letter just cited. The closing paragraph is interesting:

"Lastly to the successful candidate there comes that degree of satisfaction that he or she has been elected 'by the people' and not through the influence of some party faction."[44]

A Democrat who has three times been elected to the Hazleton city council thinks that,

" . . . there is only one just ballot and this is non-partisan for city officers. It lessens all or most of the unfair part of politics on the part of the politician. It gives the public a chance to select the best man for office and I am of the opinion that the one election should decide the issue whoever should be high man.

"I believe that the man or woman voting should be able to read and write their own name at least which would take away the power of the crooked politician and would make the issue a fair one and also a clean one."[45]

Successful Primary Candidates Defeated in Chester Election

The writer sent letters of inquiry regarding Chester's experience with the non-partisan ballot to ten successful primary candidates who were defeated in the general election. From this group four replies were received; one was from a Republican who was defeated in 1915 for a place on the city commission, and who ten years later became a member of the state legislature. This assemblyman's letter follows; it is interesting because it reveals the attitude of the hundred per cent party man:

"I have looked over these questionnaires with much care and have given them much consideration, and in reply would state that the non-

[43]Letter to writer, January, 1926.

[44]Letter to writer, January, 1926. This official is the vice president of a lumber company.

[45]Letter to writer, December, 1925. This official is in the automobile business.

partisan ballot is no longer used. It strikes me that time could be more profitably spent on more recent political questions and issues than in writing things and looking up articles on this non-partisan question.[46]

"You must realize that beginning with our national capitol at Washington down to the precincts, politics is a question of party; also from the days of George Washington down to the present time, it has been a question of party. In another sense the very beginning of this great Nation of ours, since the days when we cast off the yoke of oppression from England, down to the present time, it has been a question of party.

"With the non-partisan it is the individual with his thoughts and his theories, and these thoughts and these theories only assist as long as that particular individual holds the center of the stage, whereas with the party, there must be a definite platform, which must be so constructed as to benefit the masses rather than elevate only the individual. The party is advancing and not retarding according to its platform. Some thought that local conditions should not be a question of party, and for that reason we had the non-partisan ballot, but the State of Pennsylvania, after giving this due trial, acted wisely in repealing the non-partisan Act. As I was a candidate upon the non-partisan ticket I feel that the non-partisan ticket was a failure insofar as the non-partisan was concerned, because even over the non-partisan ballot the party candidate, be it Republican or Democrat, is elected."[47]

The other three replies from Chester were from candidates that favored the non-partisan ballot—one favored it,

" . . . for the reason that a large number of voters of independent leaning can vote in the way they wish, and in a city like ours where the vote is so largely for sale, the local election is too one-sided, without the non-partisan ballot."

In spite of this help, however, the organization candidates nearly always won because of "the purchasable vote." Later he says,

"In this town the organization is on top in local elections, mainly by reason of the colored vote, the Italian and Polish vote solidly almost for the bootleggers and the gamblers. Our trouble here is mainly that our so-called good people do not think enough of their vote to use it, and, for that reason, the foreign and colored vote control thru the outlaw element, now called the organization, in our community called the Republican party. . . I have had, with others,

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[46]This is a point well taken. The tenor of this letter is characteristic of the majority of those men that definitely oppose the non-partisan ballot.

[47]Letter to writer, March 19,1925.

for over twenty years an opposing organization, which always had a deterring effect, sometimes winning, but mostly losing, but always winning on principal and continually keeping up a fight, which always has an influence for betterment.[48]

One candidate who failed to win an election after being nominated in 1917 unqualifiedly favored the non-partisan ballot because it enabled an elected official to serve the city, whereas:

"If a candidate was elected by a political party, he would be bound body and soul to it, to do their bidding, whether they were in accord or not."[49]

The writer received a fifth letter from Chester, which came from a man who was formerly the editor of a Democratic newspaper in that city. This person thought that the non-partisan ballot was too pale an instrument to be of much value where he lived, for:

" . . . in Chester and Philadelphia also, 'Ephriam is joined to his idols'. The electorate of Chester, like that of Philadelphia, is contented to permit the superior minds who make the nominations of candidates of the Republican party do their thinking for them, and both at the primary and the general election are content to ratify the will of the boss. The machine in Chester is in good working order and to attempt to change it would be like 'casting pearls before swine."[50]

Fifty per cent of the electors will not vote. The minority party and the independents do not have the ghost of a chance.

Men Elected on Partisan Ballots

Sixteen letters regarding the non-partisan ballot were sent to the candidates in Uniontown and Connellsville and Erie who had been elected to their respective city commission after the non-partisan ballot had been repealed. Two replies were received from each of the first two cities and one reply was received from Erie.

A Republican who in 1919 was elected to the Uniontown council writes:

"My personal observation of the non-partisan idea as it was worked

[48]Letter to writer, March 23, 1925.

[49]Letter to writer, March 12, 1925. The fourth letter is favorable to the non-partisan ballot for reasons similar to those given.

[50]Letter to writer, April, 1925.

here is not at all favorable. It seemed to be impossible to get the partisan idea out of the minds of the people, especially here where one party so largely dominates.

"Candidates were slated by the majority party and orders would go out from headquarters to support the slated ticket on the morning, or before, the date of the primary.

"Another reason why the non-partisan idea in my judgment is not practical is that no party can be held responsible in case of poor or inefficient administration. With the partisan plan if an administration proves to be neglectful or inefficient, the opposing party has an opportunity at the next election to replace the various officers with men of its own choice who take the same chances as those of tried candidates."[51]

The other letter from Uniontown was from a lawyer who is a Democrat and who was elected mayor in 1923. He faintly favored the non-partisan ballot, but he thought that it had not been used long enough to enable the people to clearly see of how much benefit it was. If it were used for a long period of time, this person thinks that it would be all right.[52]

An undertaker who is a Republican and who was elected mayor of Connellsville in 1921 declares:

"Non-partisan or partisan nominations and elections in the State of Pensylvania are filthy and the last election May 18th, 1926, is all I can refer to: until voting machines are put in use there will be just such men controlling this great State as Vare, a man who defies the Constitution, who else dare defy it and why?"[53]

A ticket agent and a Republican who was a member of the 1919 Connellsville commission, writes:

"I have been in politics for 52 years and I am a strict party man with the true belief that we will have two parties for we don't want a monarchial government that the Pilgrims came to America to escape. Stick to the party at all times, is my candid opinion."[54]

A lawyer who is a Democrat and who has been elected to the office of mayor in Erie, in the partisan period in 1919, is positively for the non-partisan ballot and he gives some of the reasons why he thinks as he does regarding the non-partisan system.

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[51]Letter to writer, May 25, 1926.
[52]Letter to writer, May 25, 1926.
[53]Letter to writer, May, 1926.
[54]Letter to writer, May, 1926.

"(First)—It took the government of cities and the judiciary out of the hands of gang politics.

"(Second)—The candidates were chosen on account of their ability, rather than the fact that they belonged to any particular political party.

"(Third)—It made the candidate answerable directly to the people more than to his political party, while in state politics and national politics some party should be responsible for the conduct and ability of its office holders, that gang rule should not obtain in municipalities, or on the bench.

"(Fourth)—The state of Pennsylvania being so diversified in all of its interests and especially in that of its topography, shipping, manufacturing, mining, agriculture, religion etc., naturally has local problems which cannot come under the successful direction or domination of a great national or state political party; therefore, the non-partisan system was elegant in furnishing a solution for such local conditions. For instance, the mayor and city council in the city of Erie would have hundreds and hundreds of problems that the mayor and council of the city of Wilkes Barre have never heard of and vice versa.

"(Fifth)—It was my experience without exception that office holders elected under the non-partisan ballot took a greater interest in the duties of their office, looking at all times to the interest of the community which they served and not to the particular issues or tenets of any particular political party.

"(Sixth)—The fact that the state Republican national organization secured the repeal of the non-partisan system was an indication that they could no longer control the votes of the people for cut and dried candidates."[55]

Opinion of State Leaders on This Ballot

Apart from these letters the writer has a number of other letters that cannot easily be classified as belonging to definite groups; however, each one is from some person who was thoroughly familiar with primaries and elections during the period in which the non-partisan ballot was used. The more important of these letters will follow.

Governor Sproul signed the bill that replaced the non-partisan ballot in 1919. In a letter to the writer, dated February 27, 1924, the governor wrote:

"From what knowledge I have of the situation tho, my opinion has been and is, that the non-partisan features in both the third-class city and judicial elections in Pennsylvania were a disappointment to the proponents of these laws. The general effect was to break down

[55]Letter to writer, February 25, 1926.

party responsibility and to open the ticket to a large number of irresponsible fortune-seekers. Another very apparent effect was in the encouragement of groups of political prostitutes in the minority party, with the result that the majority bosses were often able to control the machinery of both parties rather than of only one.

"As far as I have observed, there was no improvement either in the class of officials elected or in their policies and performances."[56]

The president of the Pennsylvania Federation of Labor writes:

"In reply to your questionnaire, relative to non-partisan ballot, will say that, in my opinion, there is no such thing as a non-partisan ballot, other than in name only. Neither will such a thing as a non-partisan election be possible, as long as there are political parties in existence because, when the non-partisan ballot is made at the primaries, all political parties strive to get their partisan candidates on the non-partisan ticket and, at the general election, party lines are tightly drawn.

"A good illustration of this is just how it worked out in the councilmanic election, of Reading, a few years ago, when we operated under the Clark Non-Partisan Act. In Reading, there are three political parties. In voting strength all three are nearly equally divided. At the primaries there were, as I remember it, 17 candidates, eight to be nominated, of which four were to be elected at the regular election. Of the successful candidates at the primaries, two were Democrats, two Republicans and four were Socialists. The Democrats and Republicans then got together and conducted their campaign under the name of "American Party". This fusion of the two old parties, of course, meant that, for the balance of the ticket to win, they would have to poll more votes than both old parties combined, which they were unable to do and the two Democrats and two Republicans were elected on the so-called non-partisan ticket. Under the old party system of voting, the Socialists might have had a chance, because the contest would have been three cornered. Fusion is more difficult."[57]

The third vice-president of the Pennsylvania Federation of Labor and who is a Reading man, favors a non-partisan

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[56]This letter in an exception to the statement that these letters are from officials that had held office under the non-partisan system.

[57]Letter to writer, March 18, 1924. In the light of this concrete illustration, these last two sentences seem especially significant. Later, November 5, 1925, this same correspondent, in commenting on this 1917 fight in Reading, wrote: "Both old parties got together, made a sort of 50-50 deal, and put their fusion deal over on the plea of electing good men and business men. For any independent party (third party group) or individual, to win against such a combine was impossible. The old parties have the machine, money, patronage, press, etc., an awful combination for an independent to beat."

ballot.

"I have always felt that there were local issues different from state and state issues different from national that should depend purely on their merits as they effect the different sub-divisions.

"I am of the opinion that the non-partisan nomination and election of officers for third class cities did not receive a fair tryout and we are really unable to show the beneficial results of that law. I think, perhaps, the fact that many of the old line politicians brought a great deal of pressure to bear in securing the repeal of the law for the reason that they could not control the election as they did under the old system and as they are doing now."

He concluded with the statement:

". . . that we had the best administration under the non-partisan law that we have had since I resided here. The advantage of the non-partisan method of nomination and election of the city officials, in my judgment, is that you are able to get a better type of citizen interested in the affairs of the city and you will get away from the practice of rewarding politicians for partisan service."[58]

Conclusions

There is an overwhelming predominance of opinion in favor of the non-partisan ballot in this material that we have just gone over, partly because the groups championing the ballot are invariably more responsive to inquiries than the opposing groups are, and also because the former groups express themselves more fully than do the latter.

A large part of the value of this material lies in the way in which it is expressed, and since these letters reveal such variations in attitudes regarding this one ballot, the letters must be read rather than summarized before one can gain the full significance of them. There is a certain sameness about the point emphasized, and yet to concentrate solely upon these points is to lose the first value of this material. In conjunction with this material, however, the central arguments for and against the non-partisan ballot as revealed by these letters, may be tentatively summarized in conclusion.

The arguments of the advocates of the partisan ballot were that without that type of ballot irresponsible men are one group of 187 city officials written to, 47 replied to the

elected who behave irresponsibly in public office; that party is just as powerful and successful under a non-partisan system anyway; that politics, as personified in parties in cities as well as nations, is the backbone of our national life, and our mainstay against monarchy; and that the improvement in municipal government that was prophesied as an outcome of using the non-partisan ballot, never came about, and was merely a theoretical myth.

Those that favored the ballot usually agreed that better men had been elected during the non-partisan period than had been elected, as a rule, before that era, or have been elected under the present system. There were some, however, that thought the quality of officials had not necessarily changed, but that non-partisan elections in municipal campaigns for office were demanded by both common sense and experience. Another argument for the system that was frequently advanced was that it was far pleasanter to run for office on a non-partisan ballot, free of pledges and strings. There were also the following reasons given: The minority party has a far greater chance of being represented under this system, it is difficult to "spoil" a straight ticket by not voting it straight; and that the men elected take a greater and more constructive interest in their work in a non-partisan regime than they do when they serve under the party system.

2. QUESTIONNAIRE DATA FROM ELECTED OFFICIALS[59]

More than half of the city officials who answered the writer's letter regarding the non-partisan ballot did not fill out or in any way refer to the accompanying questionnaire. This was doubtless due, in part, to the fact that the officials were asked in certain instances to disregard the questionnaire, if they could better describe their experience with the non-partisan ballot and their opinion of it by so doing. Of

[58]Letter to writer, April 22, 1924.

[59]This questionnaire data should be considered in connection with the letters from elected candidates given on pages 33-48.

one group of 187 city officials written to, 47 replied to the writer's letter and 18 answered the specific questions enclosed. These 18 questionnaires will now be considered. The four following questions were given:

First—Do you think minority party candidates and independent candidates have a better chance of election when the non-partisan ballot is used in city elections than when party ballots are used? Why?

Second—To what extent were the majority of successful candidates supported by party organizations?

What other organizations were active in these local elections?

Third—What difference is there in the cost of running for office under the two systems—the partisan and the non-partisan?

Fourth—To what extent does party responsibility exist in local elections? What effect does the non-partisan ballot have on party responsibility?

Five of the former candidates believed that the non-partisan ballot was of no help to the minority party. Their position was fairly given by the following statement:

"The system simply developed into 'gang' control, the same as the majority party was controlled under partisan ballot."

The other thirteen believed just the reverse, and for the following reason:

"Minority party candidates and independent candidates only have a chance on the non-partisan ballot. All candidates for municipal office under the non-partisan ballot draw their place on the ballot and the majority of the voters do not know whether the men on there are Republican, Democrat, or Independent. It gives them all a chance."

In reply to the second question ten men expressed the opinion that the successful candidates were always or nearly always supported by party organizations, "just the same as before."

Four of these former councilmen believed that the party organizations were not active in supporting the successful candidates. Two could not say and two men wrote that it depended upon the nature of the campaign.

Six did not answer the second part of the second question. Five men believed that no other organizations were active in these contests and seven men said the most active organizations were voters leagues, chambers of commerce, Anti-Saloon League, American Legion, K K K , community club,

K of C, Elks, Rotary, Kiwanis and civic organizations.

Six of the former councilmen did not answer the third question, one man held that it cost the candidate less to run for office under the partisan system of election, and nine thought that there was no difference or very little difference in the cost of running for office under the two systems of election.

Evidently the fourth question was not clearly understood, or impossible to answer. One wrote, "they are more responsible people than the reformers." Another held that,

"The so-called 'regular' organizations in Pennsylvania simply wrap themselves in the cloak of the Republican party to gain election. As a rule, this same outfit does little or nothing to get out the Republican vote when it comes to the national or presidential election."

Three other answers corresponded closely to this one. Eight did not answer this question, three said that party responsibility existed to a considerable extent in local elections, and three other correspondents held the opinion that party responsibility was not important in local elections. The second section of this fourth question was not answered clearly by fourteen of the eighteen former office holders, and the other four questionnaires contained very little information that would help explain the effect of the non-partisan ballot on party responsibility. Three held the opinion that the non-partisan ballot would weaken it.

Party responsibility is a term, or one might almost say, a slogan that is used by those who do not favor the non-partisan ballot. However, if one finds out the importance and nature of this institution he must do more than write letters in which he asks about it. It is a term frequently used, but rarely defined.

Conclusions

Again those who favor the partisan rather than the non-partisan system are in the minority here numerically, and their main stands are that the gang is powerful under either system; that the minor political groups have no more chance on a non-partisan ballot than on a partisan ballot; and that the expense is less under the partisan system.

The non-partisan group think that the "ability and experience" count for more almost invariably under the non-partisan system, and that minorities have a greatly augmented chance under it. The majority of this group hold that organization support is given to successful candidates in a non-partisan as well as a partisan regime.

3. THE DEFEATED CANDIDATE

Are the defeated candidates who were nominated for city council during the non-partisan period in favor of the non-partisan ballot? In order to find out the attitude of this group, the writer sent a letter and a questionnaire to the 201 men[60] that were nominated at the primary and then defeated at the following election, in which this type of ballot was used. He asked these nominees to say just what effect the non-partisan ballot had had on the outcome of the 1913 campaign (or the particular campaign in which this successful primary candidate had been defeated at the election) and to answer 11 questions on a questionnaire.[61] Thir-

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[60]These candidates lived in the following 17 cities: Allentown, Altoona, Carbondale, Connellsville, Easton, Harrisburg, Hazelton, Lebanon, Lock Haven, McKeesport, New Castle, Pottsville, Reading, Uniontown, Wilkes Barre, Williamsport and York.

[61]When in 1913 to 1919 the non-partisan ballot was used in your city primary elections—

(1) In what ways did the candidates appeal to the voters for support at the polls: 1. Newspaper advertising? . . . 2. Placards? .. . . 3. Printed handbills? . . . 4. Personal letters? . . . 5. Rally or mass meeting? . . . 6.Personal interview? . . . 7. Candidate cards? . . . 8. Bill board advertising? . . . 9_____? . . . 10 _____?

(2) Was the character of the above appeals: 1.Strongly partisan? . . . 2. Slightly partisan? . . . 3. Non-partisan?

(3) What is the strongest appeal a candidate can make in securing election in your city?

(4) Do you think that in a non-partisan election the minority has a better chance of electing its men than in an election wherein the regular party ballot is used? . . . 1. Definitely give some concrete case to support your answer.

(5) By what means did the party organization attempt to secure the nomination and election of the candidates that they supported during the non-partisan period from 1913 to 1919?

(6) Were these party organization candidates often successful? . . . 1. Sometimes? . . . Usually? . . . Always?

(7) Did the candidates not supported by party organization have the support and material backing of some other organization or group? . . . Describe the organization.

ty-seven men answered the questionnaire and 24 of this number disclosed their views about their defeat and the non-partisan ballot by writing some sort of supplementary letter.[62]

The first thing that struck the writer's attention in examining the replies is the fact that not one of the 37 candidates attributed his defeat to the non-partisan ballot. Twenty-four men favored its use in municipal elections, while nine did not, but advocated the use of the partisan ballot for local contests. The other four nominees that replied would not come out of the woods on this proposition, and the writer cannot say whether they are for or against the non-partisan system.

The following tables and summaries give the questionnaire evidence:[63]

I TABLE 1

	Totals
Newspaper advertising	23
Placards	19
Printed handbills	8
Personal letters	16
Rally or mass meeting	10
Personal interview	21

(Footnote continued)

(8) What difference is there in the cost of running for office under the two types of ballot—the non-partisan and the partisan? . . . 1. In the primary? . . . In the election?

(9) Did such outside factors as class, wealth, race, religion and liquor interests exert a greater influence than they do when the party ballot is used?

10. Were the successful candidates more capable men, and did they more faithfully represent the city than do the city officials chosen on the regular party ballot?

(11) What particular defects have you noticed in the non-partisan method of nomination and election of city officials? . . . 1.What advantages?

[62]Of the letters that the writer sent out 38 were returned to him because the persons to whom they were addressed had either died or moved away.

[63]The difference between the total number of answers to a given question and 37 indicates the number of men that failed to answer that question. It should also be noted that six of the 37 replies were letters that did not specifically answer the questions.

Candidate cards	25
Bill board advertising	10

II TABLE 2

Strongly partisan	9
Slightly partisan	8
Non-partisan	15

III In answer to the query, "What is the strongest appeal a candidate can make in securing the election to your city council," a great variety of answers were given. These range from the almost Utopian statement, "His character, his record in public and other life, and his better fitness for public office. . . " to the grim: "My opinion is to the election boards because after all they do the electing here and not the people . . . money rules."

The partisan note was also sounded: "Republican . . . as our city is strongly Republican and the voters generally vote party."

IV TABLE 4

	Totals
Yes	15
No	11

V Six men believed that the party organizations made no attempt to secure the nomination and election of candidates that were elected during the non-partisan period, while 10 men expressed the opinion that these organizations determined the outcome of the contests. In the words of one of these former contestants parties supported candidates, "by conducting campaigns just as under the old system using every feature except party names."

Six of those who answered this question said that candidates were elected by their own individual efforts.

VI TABLE 6

	Totals
Sometimes successful	8
Usually successful	9
Always successful	6

VII TABLE 7

	Totals
Yes	8
No	12

VIII TABLE 8

	Totals
Cost more running for office non-partisan	2
Cost more running for office partisan	5
Cost the same under both systems	15

IX TABLE 9

	Totals
Yes	4
No	22

X TABLE 10

	Totals
Yes	11
No	14

XI To 24 men the advantages of the non-partisan ballot more than outweighed the defects. Nine of the former candidates held the reverse, and as the writer has already pointed out four of these unsuccessful nominees did not clearly give their position on this question.

According to those that favored this ballot the consensus of opinion seems to be that it gives a candidate an opportunity to appeal to all classes in the community regardless of the party affiliation of the candidate, and the elected official has an independence that he cannot otherwise have. "It gives the city a better class of men and also gives a better class of assistants and clerks, for where party rules the party dictates who will be assistants and clerks."

Another candidate said, "Secrecy is the great gain obtained when the non-partisan ballot is used."[64]

The position of those that oppose the non-partisan ballot may be summed up in the statement that no advantages resulted from its use, and that it might keep good men from running for office.

In addition to answering the questions asked, or in a few cases in spite of the fact that the questions asked were ig-

[64]He is doubtless thinking of the closed primary in Pennsylvania.

nored, some of the defeated candidates wrote their views concerning local politics and their own defeat in a comment on the back of the questionnaire, or in a letter. The writer believes that this material is of some significance because of the picture[65] it gives of the background against which many of the candidates thought the non-partisan ballot was placed; the non-partisan system was bound to be affected by the conditions that obtained in the contests in which it was employed. To help the reader to better appreciate the situation that may confront any electoral device that is used in local Pennsylvania elections, and to enable him to more clearly see the men that are candidates in these contests the following extracts from representative letters are given.

1. "In our city a man who gets the Republican nomination is almost assured of election regardless of his experience and fitness for the office and when the election is over you can hear the people say, "Well, John Jones and Tom Brown have the Republican nomination. They are sure of election because the Republican vote is more than twice the Democrats' vote in this city. The non-partisan method was not in any way responsible for my defeat, but rich candidates with crooked election boards were the cause of my defeat . . . I hope Pennsylvania will go back to the non-partisan way of choosing its candidates when it reforms its election laws. In the non-partisan system the successful candidates are chosen by their ability and fitness. We had lower taxes and a cheaper run city under the non-partisan elections." (Wilkes Barre.)

2. "I think the non-partisan ballot is the best for electing city officials, but in my last campaign (fall 1913) I found that nothing mattered as to who the men were, as long as you didn't grease the election boards. In one instance the judge of election assured me 250 votes for $25, or only 50 if I didn't give it to him. Well I got 51 votes in his district (needless to say I didn't pay him the $25,) but he got $25 from each of the other candidates while only 4 were elected, he later became a policeman—figure it out.

"In another district the judge of election sent word to me as late as 2 a. m. when they were counting the votes and offered to "put me across" for $200. Anyway I was defeated by only about 360 votes, which I could have easily gotten for money, but I wasn't buying my election, and honored my defeat more than a bought office.

"I could write upon a book myself on the corrupt methods used in our city by some of the election boards.

[65] Of course this is only one side of the picture; the great majority in this group believes that parties are desirable in municipal government, and this is apt to mean the Republican and Democratic parties.

"I was elected twice to select council under the old form of government. Was one of a committee of five to help bring about the commission form, but I would never lend myself to any attempt at corruption and therefore was not the man the politicians wanted.

"I took my defeat honorably (not withstanding the fact that a few hundred dollars would have bought it for me) and was very successful in business having retired at 43 years (8 years ago) and am now leading a peaceful retired life which suits me far more than having to deal with corrupt political affairs or political politicians." (Wilkes Barre).

3. "In my case to which you refer back in 1913 my recollection is that the chief arguments used against me in the campaigns were (1) that I was an aristocrat and that (2) I did not need the money the salary would yield under the new system of paying city officials. I tried to argue that if they were employing a foreman in a shop they would not give the job to a man simply because he needed the wages; but it was no use. To the average voter a city job or office was just a piece of pie to be given to the hungriest man. (York).

4. "In replying to your letter of . . . I want to say that the non-partisan system was not one of the factors that brought about my defeat. In our city you must be popular to be elected to office. The successful candidates were chosen because they were extremely popular. National party cut no figure in our city elections with the non-partisan ballot in force. As to what I think of the non-partisan ballot and Easton's experience with it. I can honestly say I do not see any difference or advantage of one plan over the other. Nor does the non-partisan plan make any difference in the political complexion of our city commission. We have at the present time a Democratic mayor, and we have at the present time one Democratic councilman and three Republican councilmen and so it goes partisan or non-partisan." (Easton).

5. While I am a strong party man and many party men do not agree with me, I believe in the non-partisan ballot for city officers and county judges. The greatest claim against it by some party men is that it weakens a political party and that there is not the same enthusiasm as when political parties are pitted against each other. On the other hand, there are many citizens who are not rank partisans who believe in the qualifications of a candidate rather than a question of party—in local self government." (Easton).

6. "I was an independent candidate as I thought one should not be affiliated with any party or anyone else. I had not made any promises directly or indirectly to any one. Spent almost $200, kept at my work all the time. Did not take to electioneering and on that ground would have been elected. On the Sunday before election the bosses had a meeting and invited me. Didn't go and they said they could not control so they had to defeat me and on Monday and at every election place they had some one to tell the people I was a non-partisan man and represented big interests and therefore had to be

defeated and I lost on those grounds." (Allentown).

7. "In my election when defeated, it was the loosest election that was ever held in the city of Connellsville. I was informed in my voting precinct that they never counted the ballot but waited to hear from each precinct to see what number of votes would be necessary to make 51 percent. I am willing to go on record in saying that there will never be honest elections until voting machines are put in use. Philadelphia and Pittsburgh proved that to the people in the last November election. It is of no use to take anything into the courts of Pennsylvania if you are not affiliated with the gang that controls the state. I believe that the political conditions throughout the United States are going to bring about a civil war if conditions do not change. Please do not consider me a radical. I have been fighting radical people for years. But the conditions in the November election have caused more people to become radical than the late war. I was mayor of Connellsville from 1922 to 1926 and was counted out by the gang because I stood back of the best governor the state of Pennsylvania ever had, Gifford Pinchot.

8. "In Lock Haven, generally, the best man was elected and I am very much inclined to think in my candidacy that I would have been elected if I had had an opportunity to do more work. If I remember rightly there were nine candidates, four to be elected and I do not think the question of party politics entered into the election of the successful candidates; although the four men elected were party men, and I was known as a very strong independent. The high man, nearly all the factions united on him and he received a very large vote. The next six candidates were very close and I was only defeated by five votes, being fifth, on the list, and I would have been elected without any question, but we had our court of two weeks at that time and I was engaged every minute trying cases and did not electioneer at all. . .

I think the non-partisan system for electing members of the council in the third class cities is the only way to select the men, and while some mistakes are made in the selection of these men, generally the best man wins."

9. "Now if you wish the facts from all angles in politics particularily in city and county elections just come out for some office, if you have plenty of money, you have a chance to be elected on any ticket you choose, then you will learn human nature. They are all your friend as long as the money lasts. You have seen in the last state election that two cities overruled the whole state. It was money that done it, you must have the practical work, and see for yourself then you have knowledge that you are working for." (Williamsport).

4. QUESTIONNAIRES FROM THOSE WHO ARE ACTIVELY INTERESTED IN LOCAL POLITICS

By means of talks and correspondence with a number of

men who have long been interested in the political affairs of some one or more cities in Pennsylvania the writer has been able to make up a list of names of 133 men to whom he could profitably send questionnaires.[66] The men written to lived in some 22 cities of the third class in Pennsylvania and 17 cities were represented in the 46 replies that were received. Some of these 46 questionnaires were answered by men who had long held some public office in the cities in which they lived; others were answered by those who had helped elect men to office, but had not themselves stood for election. In other cases the questions on these questionnaires were answered by persons who had been familiar with the political situation in their respective cities during at least one campaign, and often the entire period in which the non-partisan ballot was used; and in many cases they

[66]The questionnaire follows:

When in 1913 to 1919 the non-partisan ballot was used in your city primaries and elections—

(1) Were the voters in your opinion sufficiently informed about the candidates that were supported to make an intelligent choice? 1. At the primary? . . . 2. At the election?

(2) In what ways did the candidates appeal to the voters for support at the polls—1. Newspaper advertising? . . . 2. Placard or bill board advertising? . . . 3. Printed handbills? . . . 4 Personal letters? . . . 5. Rally or mass meeting? . . . 6. Brass bands, parades? . . . 7. Campaign buttons? . . . 8. _____? . . . 9. _____?

(3) Was the character of the above appeals—1. Strongly partisan? . . . 2. Slightly partisan? . . . 3. Non-partisan?

(4) What is the strongest appeal a candidate can make?

(5) Do you think that in a non-partisan election the minority party has a better chance of electing its men than in an election wherein the regular party ballot is used? . . . 1. Can you cite concrete examples to the above?

(6) Did the party organization actively support certain candidates?

(7) By what means did the organization attempt to secure the nomination and election of these candidates?

(8) Were the organization candidates often successful?—1. Sometimes? . . . 2. Usually? . . . 3. Always?

(9) Did the candidates not supported by party organizations have some sort of organization support? If so, what sort was it?

(10) Did such outside factors as class, wealth, race, religion, and liquor interests exert a greater influence than they do when the regular party ballot is used?

(11) Were the successful candidates more capable men, and did they more faithfully represent the city than the city officials chosen on the regular party ballot?

(12) What particular defects have you noticed in the non-partisan method of nomination and election of city officials? . . . 1. What advantages?

had first hand information about the political contests that had taken place both before and after the era of the non-partisan ballot.

The questions will be taken up in order, and when the answers from the material can be stated numerically they will be; in certain cases additional comments will also be given.

I In reply to the first question asked, 40 persons were of the opinion that the voters were sufficiently informed about the candidates that they supported at the primary and election to make an intelligent choice and four held the opposite view.[67]

II The following methods of appeal were given:

Newspaper advertising	45
Placards or bill board advertising	26
Printed handbills	26
Personal letters	38
Rallies or mass meetings	24
Brass bands or parades	5
Personal interview	40
Campaign buttons	6

One person said that civic organizations influenced voters by asking candidates by letter and in newspapers, where they stood on important civic questions. Another said that churches had speakers to support candidates. Still another person said that candidates won votes by organizing election districts. "As a rule a candidate will have a committee to work in each district." Personal canvas by candidates and friends is a method described by one person who replied. Campaigning through heads of departments in industrial establishments was given as a good method by two persons. Another way the voter was appealed to was "by having automobiles go over the streets with large advertisements

[67] Those who replied made no distinction between primaries and elections. Evidently the opinion was held that if a voter was informed about candidates at the primary, the same condition obtained at the election.

displayed." Two other persons added "window cards" to the list of methods that had been used by the candidates to win support at the polls.

III The above appeals were:

Strongly partisan	7
Slightly partisan	12
Non-partisan	23

IV The strongest appeal that a candidate can make is:

Fitness for office, a good record	29
Strong party man and a good fellow	7

(1) "Difficult to determine. I have seen men elected who possessed no qualifications beyond genial smile and warm handshake."

(2) "Depends upon the state of the electorate at a given moment. Lax rule is often a successful appeal. Churchmen do not hang together."

V Thirty-one persons said that the majority party had a better chance of electing its men under the non-partisan system than under the partisan system. Seven held the reverse. Representative comments in connection with this fifth question follow:

(1) "Yes, on non-partisan ticket the candidate wins on the basis of his fitness for office and not so much on party affiliation.

(2) "My largest vote was in wards where my party was in minority because I had influential friends of majority party who considered friendship above party."

(3) "No. In a non-partisan election the strong party has the decided advantage. They will use their party machinery to the best advantage, and to this they can put some time to influencing the members of weaker parties, by championing non-partisanship."

VI Thirty-two persons answered the sixth question affirmatively, 11 negatively and one person was uncertain regarding the organization support of candidates.

VII A summary of the answers to the seventh question follows:

By instructions to city, ward, and district committee organizations and to office holders, or "by the usual

methods."—23.

No organization here, every candidate for himself.—5.

VIII Twelve questionnaires indicated that the organization candidates were sometimes successful. Twenty-three were of the opinion that they were usually successful, and six held that the candidates supported by the regular party organization were always successful. Five failed to answer this question.

IX The following summarized statements indicate the answers received to the ninth question:

(1) "They had whatever personal organization they could muster."—11.
(2) "Civic and school board organizations permitted certain members to address their members."—3.
(3) "Time was too short to build up a strong organization support. Support of influential citizens was strongest. These often worked together, but could not develop plans for a campaign."—1.

X Thirty-seven people said that such outside factors as class, wealth, race, religion, and liquor interests do not exert a greater influence when the non-partisan ballot is used than they do when the regular party ballot is used; six men held the exact opposite.

XI Nineteen persons who answered the writer's questionnaire thought that the successful candidates chosen under the non-partisan ballot were more capable men and more faithfully represented the city than the city officials who were chosen on the regular party ballot; 12 persons answered this question in the negative and eight of those who replied saw no difference in the calibre of officials chosen under the two systems.

Ninteen thought that the advantages more than outweighed the defects of the non-partisan system, six thought just the reverse, and seven were uncertain. The following comments are representative of those that were received:

(1) "Defects: No defects. Erie Council passed a resolution protesting against going back to party politics.

Advantages. When you are elected you realize that you are to work for the best interests of the city and not for the best interests of your party. City government should be the same as running a big private corporation. You get away from demands being made upon you by party leaders."

(2) "Defects: None.
Advantages: Inducing good men opposed to being known as politicians to run for office."

(3) "Defects: Involves greater expense and usually does not bring out best material. Advantages of the non-partisan ballot are theoretical. A political party is needed to bring out the best man who can get the votes. 'For forms of government let fools contest, what's best administered is best.' "

5. THE NON-PARTISAN BALLOT AND THE PARTY ORGANIZATION

That the men of the dominant party organization are invariably opposed to the non-partisan ballot is undeniable, and that the majority of minority party organization men are also hostile toward this method of election is equally clear. What is not so clear, nor so easily ascertainable, is the effect of the non-partisan ballot on party organization. If the non-partisan ballot is unpopular among organization men—why is this so? In what way does this ballot without party labels make party control more difficult? At what point does it weaken, if it does, party organization? What is the effect of the non-partisan ballot on party organization?

One might know that X is a Republican and Z a Democrat without having any clew to their respective attitudes towards the non-partisan ballot, but if X were a strong party organization man and Z were in no tangible or spiritual way associated with the organization, it would be easy to know that X would oppose this ballot and that Z might be either for it or against it, and if he were a liberal, an independent, or a progressive, he would doubtless be in favor of the non-partisan ballot.[68]

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[68]One need scarcely be told that the following resolution was passed by a political party that was less than two years old:

"Resolved, that we approve the non-partisan ballot for such offices, as have already been designated by the legislature, and that the mem-

An excellent illustration of what the writer believes to be the attitude of practically all of the majority party organization men and a preponderant number of minority party organization men may be found in the "Reading Eagle" for October 21, 1915. This issue of this newspaper contains a letter written during the election campaign by the chairman of the Democratic county committee of Berks county to one of the Reading councilmanic nominees.

"To Peter S. Holl.

"I desire to address this open letter to you for the purpose of clearing up a situation which puzzles a large number of Democrats.

"I have reliable information that the mayor, Ira W. Stratton Wing, of the Republican party is actively supporting you for the office of councilman, and therefore am led to believe that you favor Mayor Stratton's candidate for Mayor—George M. Jones.

"Of course, I understand the election of a mayor and councilman is non-partisan, and whilst I have my doubts as to the wisdom of this particular way of voting, yet it should not be made the means of fooling the people.

"No candidate nor set of candidates for the office of councilman should be permitted to masquerade as Democrats, then shelter themselves behind the non-partisan ticket and support a candidate for mayor of a different political party.

"The non-partisan feature of the ballot means nothing and stands for nothing. It is abhorrent to all parties and its repeal by the next or succeeding legislature is a foregone conclusion.

"It is a matter of common knowledge, that under the present non-partisan method of voting, Democrats support Democrats and Republicans support Republicans.

"I understand that you are registered as a Democrat and for that reason you will receive a large number of Democratic votes, but these voters are entitled to know what your attitude is on the question of the election of a mayor, and therefore in behalf of these Democratic voters, I, as Chairman of the Democratic standing committee, will ask you the following question:

"Whom do you favor for mayor?

"This question must be answered by saying, I favor Mr. Filbert, or I favor Mr. Jones, as the case may be, and it must be answered not later than Saturday evening of this week. If it is not answered as indicated by me, I will assume that you favor Mr. Jones, and that

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(Footnote continued)
bers of the Washington party pledge themselves to use their best endeavors for the election of the nominees, standing for the best for the community, whose names appear upon the non-partisan ballot without regard to their past or present party affiliation." (The "Reading Eagle", August 9, 1913.)

my information in regard to this matter is correct.

"I am addressing a similar letter to Councilman Jacob H. McConnell.

Yours very truly,
HOWARD W. BODY
Oley Township, Chairman
Democratic County Committee."

The next day the "Eagle" printed a news item in which it said that the Body letter had stirred the two nominees to wrath and they wondered why they had been singled out for such treatment. Mr. Holl declared that the letter had not been authorized by the Democratic county committee. It was further contended that Mr. Body was not a city voter. It was explained that the county committee's jurisdiction covered the city as well as the rural sections. Many will agree with the "Eagle" in saying that "the prospects are that on both sides the non-partisan law will be more or less of a dead letter when the battle of November 2nd is waged."[69]

No one agreed more fully with this idea than the Socialists of Reading. At one of their rallies a speaker said that the eight misnamed non-partisan candidates for councilmen kept quiet and were evidently observing the advice of Matt Quay who said "Don't talk." This letter from Body might prevent two of them from playing both ends and the middle. It was thought that Body's question would open the eyes of the workers in Reading and they would now see the three parties as they actually were:

"The Socialist party, which makes no pretense to being anything but a working class party, admits that it is partisan. That it champions the cause of the working class and would have no hesitancy in doing anything that would help the toilers, even if it hurt the interests of those who live off the toil of the workers.

"Non-partisanship is a joke and no one knows this better than those who are making a pretense to practice it."[70]

In order to more fully find out the reason for the attitude

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[69]October 22, 1915.

[70]Notwithstanding these unmistakable signs of bitter partisanship in the local campaign, there were competent observers who said that even here more voters considered solely the record of the candidate than would have been the case had party ballots been used.

of party organization men toward the non-partisan ballot and its effect upon the party organization, letters containing questionnaires[71] were sent to the members of both the Republican and Democratic state central committees in Pennsylvania. At first 29 letters were sent to the members of the Republican state central committee that live in cities of the third class in Pennsylvania. Five of the 29 members made some sort of a reply. Two of the five had no information on this subject. Two of the five thought that the non-partisan ballot would not help the minority party and one thought it would. The latter thought that it would help the disgruntled office seekers and their friends bolt the ticket. The first two thought that 100% of the successful candidates were supported by party organizations in their campaigns for office. The third member thought that only two percent were so supported. No one of the three members knew or attempted to say in what way the non-partisan ballot affected the party organization. One of the men condemned the non-partisan ballot generally as it worked out in Reading. He said that,

> "No man was or will be greater than his country, religion or political party and when you remove such an obligation sooner or later, the temptations of ambition will create his own downfall. Investigation will show that the successful non-partisan candidates nearly all are of that party's faith that dominates that political section; this is proof that a non-partisan ballot has no value in its true sense."

A letter was also sent to one of the state leaders of the Republican party and a former state treasurer, who replied,

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[71] The questions asked were:

First. "Do you think minority party candidates and independent candidates have a better chance of election when the non-partisan ballot is used in city elections, than when party ballots are used? Give reasons."

Second. "What percent of the successful candidates for city office under the non-partisan system were supported by a party organization?"

Third. "Name the organizations that were active in the city campaigns."

Fourth: "Give definite cases in which the non-partisan ballot affected, either weakened or strengthened, the party organization."

"I know that in third class cities the non-partisan ballot and the result from it has brought no particular good that could not have been obtained otherwise. Wherever the parties are evenly divided, the partisan ballot very often brings the best to both parties on the ticket, where one party has a large majority over the other, the non-partisan ballot has not brought any results worthy of mention".

The chairman of the state central committee of the Republican party more concretely gave his reasons why he believed that the experience of Pennsylvania with the non-partisan system of electing candidates proved anything but satisfactory.

"Of course men belonging to minority parties had a better chance of election when a non-partisan ballot was used, but at the same time men of the majority party who could never have been elected under a partisan system and who were lacking in qualifications necessary to occupy public positions showed extraordinary strength, and in one case (for supreme court vacancy in the state) one of these non-descript citizens almost won an election".

"In the cities of the state where the non-partisan system of electing officials was tried, there was no appreciable improvement in the calibre of the men chosen to office, and in cases where high class citizens were selected, their work did not in all cases give satisfaction, by reason of the fact that they disavowed responsibility to any party or organization and therefore felt free to act without consultation with leading citizens of their respective communities. In other words, party responsibility has proven a most effective stabilizer".

"It is far more costly to run for office under a non-partisan system than the partisan. This is explained by reason of the fact that many a man will not run when he knows the party leaders are not for him. If there is no party nomination to be had, more candidates will enter the field, the contest will become more exciting and acrimonious, with the result that much more money will be spent for circularizing and advertisements."[72]

Twenty-five letters and questionnaires were sent to the

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[72]Letter to writer, March 19, 1925.

Party committeemen, party organization candidates and officials that have been interviewed and written to by the writer usually express ideas that are more general and universal than those contained in this chairman's letter. However, when they pointed out specific reasons for their attitude on the non-partisan ballot they invariably gave reasons that were in close harmony with this chairman's reasons. One election official who was not definite said: "If there was one thing that ruined the Republican party it was the non-partisan ballot. As far as parties are concerned it was a poor move, as far as giving the public a chance it might have been a good move."

members of the Democratic committee that live in cities of the third class and from this group six replies were received.[73]

One committeeman in Allentown was of the opinion that the non-partisan ballot was of no help to the minority party, and tended to disrupt the party more than aid it. While the non-partisan ballot was used the parties controlled the election. "The theory may be all right, but it does not work out as there are political offices that are to be filled by political parties."[74]

This view is endorsed by another Democratic committeeman from Allentown who said that the non-partisan ballot was of no help to the Democratic party, and added:

"In a small county such as Lehigh the candidate is usually well known, as is his political leanings, while our voters register according to party affiliation, at the general electon party affiliation means but little in this county. It is a common occurrence in this county to elect some officials by an overwhelming majority from one party and another candidate from the other party by an equally large majority. At our last election for judge in this county a Democrat and a Republican were elected; also a Democratic prothonotary and recorder of deeds and a Republican sheriff and district attorney, all of whom had large majorities."[75]

A committeeman, who is a lawyer in Wilkes Barre, said that he knew nothing about the effect of the non-partisan ballot on party organization and therefore he could not answer the questions asked. A committeeman living near Wilkes Barre was undecided as to which ballot was the best. "However, I think I would decide in favor of the non-partisan ballot." He then added:

"It makes no particular difference what kind of a ballot system we have as long as election boards get drunk and steal the ballot box and its contents in order to keep an honest man who had a majority of the votes from taking his seat in office. We must first have an enforcement of the law, which we are farther from today than ever before. You who live in Philadelphia had an example of political thievery just recently. The same machines all over our land are be-

[73]The questionnaire was the same as the one sent to the Republican committeeman.

[74]Letter to writer, November 3, 1925.

[75]Letter to writer, November, 1925.

ing manipulated to elect men to office who are a part of corrupt policies and politics.

"I am a Democrat but never voted the straight ticket in 46 years voting. We have too much 18th Amendment, K. K. K. and Knights of Columbus and a thousand other things going on back of the screen that gives me more concern than which ballot is the best for all concerned."[76]

The two committeemen of the six that replied who clearly favored the non-partisan ballot thought that it helped the minority candidates:

"Because party lines are apt to be discarded, better men are willing to be candidates if relieved from the disagreeable features of a partisan contest in which a minority party has slight chance of success."

"Furthermore, practically none of the successful candidates were supported by a party organization, for the election 'was in fact as well as in name non-partisan'. A local "Citizens' Committee" composed of Republicans, Democrats and Progressives recommended candidates to the voters. As for weakening the party organization, this committeeman "cannot give definite case and doubts if it does"—minority parties have better chance to elect certain members of their organizations, providing they are good men commanding public esteem."[77]

In response to a second questionnaire and letter sent out to the members of the Democratic state committee, 30 replies were received.[78]

Six committeemen were opposed to the non-partisan ballot because "it was demoralizing and injurious and tended

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[76]Letter to writer, October 22, 1925.

[77]Letter to writer, November, 1925. This committeeman lives in Bradford. The writer of the other favorable letter referred to above, lives in Williamsport. He agrees in substance with the Bradford writer and adds: "When party ballots are used, it is not a question of fitness but a question of party success that influences the voter in casting his or her ballot."

[78]A letter and questionnaire were sent to all of the 113 members of the Democratic state committee in connection with a study of the state committeemen. Twelve questions were asked and one of these questions was concerned with the effect of the non-partisan ballot on party organization. Thirty replies were received to the general questionnaire, 15 of which either said nothing about, or were unfamiliar with the non-partisan ballot. Six opposed it, seven favored this ballot, one reply was unintelligible to the writer and one was both for and against it. Of this group 2 had already written to the writer in answer to his former questionnaire.

to break down party lines," and furthermore, "the non-partisan law changed party government in Pittsburgh to factional government with no party responsibility." Seven letters were received from committeemen who favor the use of the non-partisan ballot in municipal primaries and elections. It will suffice to say that six are similar in their opinions to those that have already been quoted above by friends of the non-partisan ballot; the seventh, is more significant and this opinion merits careful thought.

"I would like to see a non-partisan primary as so many well intentioned Democrats enroll as Republicans to help nominate better officers, also would like to see minority officers abolished as they lead to far reaching corruption of the party.

"In regard to the first point, non-partisan primaries— there are always twice as many Democratic votes at a general election in this county as there are enrolled Democrats, which indicates that fully half the Democrats are enrolled Republican for the reason mentioned above. When there is a real primary contest in our own party, delegates to national convention control the state committee, county commissioner, jury commissioner, etc. The Independents are handicapped because so many well meaning members of the party are enrolled in the other party. The bi-partisan forces with the help of the Republican machine can always see to it that enough enrollments are changed in Chester and Clifton to swing the election".[79]

A Republican who is now a local judge and who was formerly the chairman of the county committees in a county that contains about as many Democrats as Republicans, and a city of the third class, explained his attitude regarding the non-partisan ballot in the following statement:

"The result of the non-partisan city election in Pennsylvania was to develop a city organization which belonged to no party, was responsible to no person and which was self-perpetuating. It was surrounded with all the evils of the regular party organizations, to which were added many other evils on account of its irresponsibility, which neither of the regular party organizations could entertain and exist under; at least in the smaller cities. The effect was that minority groups, who were interested in organized evils of various kinds, were about to control the policies of the city greater than ever before.

"It is impossible to divorce politics from politics. The scheme of having a non-partisan election is impractical and inconsistent. Re-

[79]February, 1926.

verting back to the regular party form of nominations, we find that the holding of municipal elections at a different time than the elections for state and Federal offices has resulted in the regular parties being used as a means of putting across a purely local or municipal election based upon a platform purely municipal; that issues, local and municipal, are raised and fought over and that quite frequently the city will elect favorite candidates for city office from both of the major parties by equally large majorities That the present form of short-ballot and easy methods of splitting a ticket has resulted in greater independence in voting."

Conclusions

The briefest glance at the foregoing material will show one that the party organization men do not like the non-partisan ballot. The few minority party men that profess a friendship for it are exceptions to the rule, and they probably are not "regular" organization men. Surely that one is not who[80] favored the non-partisan system because the Democrats in her community enrolled as Republicans so that they might have some "say" in the men that were elected to public office. This they could not have as long as they confined their effort to nominating democratic nominees. Only Republicans are elected in certain sections of Pennsylvania and if the Democrats do not help determine which candidate is given the privilege of using the Republican label they might as well not vote. The non-partisan ballot removed a barrier, or partially removed one, that party men want to save. The party name is a buttress that they like to lean on whether its support is essential to their success or not. Without it the election contest may be a "free for all" in which the outsider, the reformer or independent, and the insider, the regular party organization man both have a chance of winning office. Not an equal chance it is true for one is likely to have the benefit of a very strong and efficient organization, but the contest is no longer one between closed corporations, and this is one very important reason why the party organization men are opposed to the non-partisan ballot.

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[80]She is the wife of a professor of political science who is an authority in the field of political parties and elections.

6. THE NON-PARTISAN BALLOT AND THE PRESS

SECTION A

Did the voter find in the newspapers adequate explanation and support of the non-partisan ballot? In seeking an answer to this question we shall consider the attitude of the press as it is revealed by editorials and news items, some of which were published before the non-partisan ballot was tried in 1913, but the greater part of which were published after the non-partisan ballot had been tried one or more times.[81]

On the day before the 1913 primary the "York Dispatch" made this plea for non-partisanship:

"A banner has been placed in Center Square bearing the inscription, 'York First.' This is designed as a suggestion to voters for their guidance in voting for city councilmen tomorrow.

"The design of the new municipal law is to eliminate partisan politics from the government of cities. Candidates are to be nominated from the ranks of the people and not as representatives of any party. This means that York, not a political party, is to be taken into consideration when choosing councilmen. When you wish to select your men to vote for tomorrow it is not your duty as a voter to ask for the candidate's partisan leaning. If you vote for a man because he is a Democrat, Republican, Socialist, or Washington party adherent, you are not doing your duty to your city. . . Vote for candidates solely on their qualification . . . Do not vote for a man because he belongs to your church, lodge, or other organization. The

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[81]The election years covered are 1913, 1915, 1917, and 1919. Materials for 1921 and 1923 will be briefly given, for the newspaper comments in those years were in substance and tenor like those that were published in 1919, except for the fact that there was even less said about non-partisanship. With the exception of the Altoona and Reading press which adequately described the campaigns in their cities, and they had lively campaigns to describe, the writer found that newspapers that contained much news material about the non-partisan primaries and elections in 1913 and 1915 were noticeably silent in 1917. Often in this year the municipal campaign was crowded off the front page by the more compelling war news. In view of the fact that America entered the war at this time the municipal contest would have attracted little newspaper attention regardless of the type of ballot.

Sixteen newspapers were examined in the course of this study of the press. Some of them like the "Altoona Tribune" and the "York Gazette" are not quoted because they contained so little material on the subject of this chapter.

object of the new law is to give cities a non-partisan government."

In an editorial the "Gazette and Bulletin" of Williamsport urged the people to vote for strong men and declared that[82] "party ties should be forgotten. There will not be on the primary ballot today, or at the general election on November 4, anything to show to what party the candidates for city commissioners belong. Nor should there be, for good government is more important than politics."[83] The "Pittston Gazette" was by no means satisfied that a non-partisan ballot would insure a non-partisan election but they were inclined to believe that it would help.

Two weeks later, however, the "Gazette" was even less certain of the power of the non-partisan ballot to separate partisan politics from local elections.

"The old order has not changed. Although the intention and purpose of the Clark bill creating a commission form of government was to eliminate party cleavages in local politics, it has had no such effect upon Pittston. The situation is the same as it has been time out-of-mind."

In Erie the "Dispatch" made this rather non-commital statement a few days before the primary:

"If the voters show the same old partisan divisions in spite of the apparent non-partisanship of the ballot, the experiment will, at least for the beginning be a failure. . . . Non-partisanship means picking the best men, the men conspiciously best fitted for the positions."[84]

The "Harrisburg Patriot" made this observation a week before the primary:

"For city council, it is said, some of the Republican bosses have picked out Lynch, Affleck, and Taylor, and Umberger because Umberger has shown some independence in councils. One rumor has it that the organization needs only three councilmen, so it is backing Lynch, Affleck and Taylor, who have been Republicans, and Gorgas, who has been a Democrat.

"The candidates named in these rumors deny that any of the old

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[82]September 16, 1913.

[83]Earlier in the campaign the "Gazette and Bulletin" had selected eight candidates from the field of 53 to present to the voter for his consideration. A special editorial was written about each one of the eight thus chosen.

[84]September 14, 1913.

gang is back of them. In fact no candidate now in the field wants it openly known that Hershey, Beidleman or any other politician is back of him. This will be the greatest year for candidates who are independents that ever happened."[85]

The "Reading Eagle" for August 15, 1913, asks, "who will be the Socialist candidates for city council under the commission form of government? This is a question that is creating considerable discussion in political circles." A few days later the "Eagle" described the pre-primary situation in these words:

"A study of the names of the 44 candidates for city councilman develops the fact that 20 of them are Democrats, 12 of them Republicans, five Bull Moose, four Socialists, two hardly to be classed and one ex-Socialist.

"In spite of the fact, that this will be a non-partisan primary and election, so far as the city councilmanic candidates are concerned, it is nevertheless realized that the political affiliation of the various aspirants in the past will be, in a large degree, an influence to many voters."[86]

Even tho Scranton was a city of the second class in 1913, we shall quote from one of its editorials because of its pertinency and because Scranton, too, was using a non-partisan ballot for the first time.

"We protest against any political party or any representative of a political party acting in the name of a party, getting together to pull municipal candidates out of the field. We protest against it because we believe it to be morally wrong, legally wrong and in fact, we believe it to be an act of public betrayal which will receive the condemnation of all sane and honest citizens."[87]

To what extent the opinion of the press regarding the

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[85]September 9, 1913.

A picture of party activity is revealed by the "Harrisburg Telegraph" for September 12, 1913. "Republicans from various parts of the city as well as the East End Republican Club got together and an old fashioned revival of party enthusiasm resulted. The occasion was the club's reception of the Republican candidates.

"The rooms were crowded with members and their friends and 25 or more Republican candidates for the various county offices and the city council were on hand and made brief speeches."

[86]August 29, 1913.

[87]This paper came out strongly for the new law, deeply resenting efforts at sabotage. The "Scranton Tribune-Republican", September 4, 1913.

new non-partisan system was changed by observing it in actual operation may be seen in part by the following editorial comments. The paper previously quoted that gave the non-partisan ballot idea its most unqualified support was the "Scranton Tribune-Republican"; after the primary and the election the editor of this paper wrote:

"The first thing to emphasize in Mr. E. B. Jermyn's great victory is that he is mayor of the whole city; he is not the Republican mayor or the Democratic mayor, or the Washington party mayor; he is simply the mayor of Scranton—an executive without party affiliations and free from all party obligation.[88]

The "Harrisburg Patriot" declared that,

"The first non-partisan primary election for the nomination of candidates for the city council under our new form of government, under all the circumstances, is as satisfactory in its results as could have been reasonably expected. . . . Every one of the eight (candidates) has a public official record either as a member of councils, or of a municipal board with very few important functions."[89]

A few days later it branded as "deliberate falsehoods, absolutely devoid of truth," these statements that a rival

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[88]The Philadelphia "North American" for September 19, 1913, heartily endorsed the use of the non-partisan ballot in local elections in these words. "and the best primary of all, we are convinced, is that for the non-partisan nomination of judicial and certain municipal candidates. We believe that, so far as county and state officers are concerned, the primaries are more important than the elections.

"Nominees for mayors of second class cities and commissioners of third class cities were selected in the same manner; and anyone who needs to be convinced of the efficacy of the non-partisan law need only examine the personnel of the men who offered themselves as candidates. Business and professional men who never would have been in politics under the old system will in scores of cases replace unworthy councilmanic representatives of bossism.

"Special privilege looks upon the popular and non-partisan primary as its greatest foe, and hence will work strenuously to discredit it. Agents and newspapers of special privilege are already charging that the wholesale nominations made are due to the new system. An analysis of Tuesday's results utterly destroys the false plea."

After the final election another editorial in the "North American" suggested that, "the chief obstacle in the way of good municipal government in the state has been the combining of local, state and national contests in single elections conducted on partisan lines. The people were made to believe that they were voting to protect pig-iron by voting for a contractor or a thief to run their municipal affairs." November 5, 1913.

[89]September 19, 1913.

newspaper made to the effect that the Democrats were "trying to defeat the intent of the bill providing for a non-partisan city council."[90]

This rival paper of opposite party faith, the "Telegraph", was opposed to both the non-partisan ballot and the commission type of government; its editorial comment after the primary was:

" . . . after all that has been said about the beauties of non-partisanship in municipal management, it is rather disconcerting and discouraging thing to learn that the Democratic machine of Harrisburg is laying its plans to capture the majority of the commission.[91]

However, this newspaper also said that:

"It has been discovered by some who endeavored at the outset to play party politics that they were more likely to damage their favorites in such a game than aid them and forthwith the party game was abandoned, at least in the open."[92]

The day after the final election the "Telegraph" said:

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[90]September 25, 1913.

"People who read the "Telegraph's" article on Saturday night recalled that there had been some covert attempts made by the Democratic bosses to work through a slate at the eleventh hour. They were afraid to come out in the open and McCormick's "Patriot" kept yelling about Republican slate so that the trick of its owner could be worked. The names of several Democrats were printed on cards and passed around. On the face it looked innocent enough but when the machine adherents doctored up the list it was something different. One card contained the names of Gorgas, Morgenthaler, Kreidler, Nead, Rodenhover and Moody in the order named, with the printed admonition to vote for four. When the cards got into circulation the names of Gorgas, Morgenthaler and Kreidler were found to be marked by crosses and another card printed in the same type, containing the names of Gorgas, Morgenthaler and Kreidler with one Republican. These cards are said to have started on their trip from the Central Democratic club."—The "Harrisburg Telegraph," September 11, 1913.

[91]"What is McCormick trying to do to Harrisburg? Is he working and dealing and dickering to get a majority of the non-partisan commission for his personally controlled Democratic machine, or is he not? He praises or keeps silence where the people are being robbed in his service. He charges all sorts of crimes against those who are endeavoring to prevent the robbery. 'The question before the electorate of the Capitol city of Pennsylvania just now is, will the Golden Maggot be Permitted to Gnaw out the Vitals of Our Non-Partisan Commission Government.' "—The "Harrisburg Telegraph." September 26, 1913.

[92]October 24, 1913.

"The average voter showed mighty little concern in the results last night. The general disgust and dissatisfaction over the form of the ballot and the complicated non-partisan feature of the election seemed to effect the usual election night atmosphere."[93]

On November 13, 1913, it commended "the apparent harmony with which the fine citizens who will conduct our municipal affairs are going about the consideration of their duties," and it again referred to the "crude system imposed upon us by an over-indulgent legislature."[94]

The first comment of the "York Dispatch" after the primary was concerned with the direct, rather than the non-partisan feature, of the primary.

"The results should prove a disappointment to those who expect the direct primary to be an advantage over the old convention system. The ticket is neither better nor worse than could have been chosen by the indirect method in use in past elections."[95]

"A strong undercurrent exists in partisan circles to make the coming city election a partisan one. Daily can partisans be heard voicing the sentiment, 'we should elect all our men for council.' All of which goes to show that the rank and file of voters has not been educated up to the non-partisan idea in municipal management."[96]

After the final election the "Dispatch" was more certain of its position on the non-partisan ballot than ever before:

. . . "So far as York is concerned, the non-partisan election idea is a farce. Yesterday the Democrats carried the city by a plurality of about 1,000. The Democrats brushed aside the non-partisan attempt of the law and rallied their partisan vote, with the result that they elected a solidly Democratic city council. In the first test of the non-partisan people's rule theory of government, a total failure has been recorded in this city . . . They were nominated by the people in the exercise of their free will without the domination of bosses."[97]

The editorial concludes with the statement that if party organization had had the responsibility of nominating the candidates the voters would have had better material to select from at the election.

The "Chester Times" made this observation following the

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[93]November 5, 1913.
[94]November 13, 1913.
[95]September 17, 1913.
[96]October 3, 1913.
[97]November 5, 1913.

primary:

"with more than a score of candidates it was inevitable that concentration upon any group could only be possible by organization and the vote indicates the degree of success each aspirant profited by such method.

"It was a non-partisan primary, but that does not deprive a political party from using its machinery to compass the nomination of members of its own organization: and there are distinct traces in the returns of partisan bias in the record of the voters. Men supported friends in not a few instances because they were Republicans, Democrats, Progressives, or Prohibitionists. Yet on the other hand an analysis of the vote makes it clear that a very large measure of independent voting was done. It was a question of men, not party, with the majority of electors . . . the first experiment in attempting to divorce a municipal primary from political domination was sufficiently satisfactory to lead to the conviction that the non-partisan ballot possesses distinct advantages."[98]

After the final election the "Times" said:

"In this city the party workers were at the polls on the tick of the clock at seven o'clock and remained on duty all day long and until late in the night when the result was announced. There was no disorder marking the election, although the keenest interest was shown. The candidates backed by the city organization (Republican) won by good majorities. . . . "[99]

The "Erie Dispatch" made this very intelligent comment concerning the primary election:

"The very first result of the primary is quite open to view. The men who had some sort of organization back of them were nominated. Those who had no organization but who depended upon the non-partisan primary to sift ability and character were defeated. This does not mean that the nominees are not good men, but it does mean that they were not in all cases selected purely for their merit. There were very decided issues in the campaign although they were not once clearly stated. The labor element nominated its men without difficulty. Its vote was concentrated. The Socialists by concentrating their vote, also nominated three of their candidates. The Voters League, a paper organization, only elected two of its men. These two were elected for their ability. Two were selected apparently for their vote catching ability, but they were de-

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[98]September 17, 1913.
Immediately after the primary the "Times" said: "Never in the history of the city was there as much interest taken in a primary election as that of yesterday." September 17, 1913.

[99]November 5, 1913.

feated, and their defeat ought to teach slate makers a very good lesson."[100]

At the general election the "Dispatch" said:

"There has been a new alignment in Erie politics. The lines are not cast along those of the ancient political divisions based on the larger issues of the nation and state. They have been entirely local. But one effort has been made to have them stretch further. Outside of that the arguments have been chiefly those pertaining to local conditions, past, present and future."[101]

The first editorial comment that was made by the "Chronicle and News" of Allentown after the primary was that "the contest was conducted in a sort of hit and miss fashion and in some respects the voters missed it badly."[102] One month later it urged the voters to study the records of the candidates running for public office, for

" . . . endorsements by secret societies, organizations of other types or by individuals should carry with them little weight, as such endorsements might be prompted by ulterior social or political motives. It is the duty of the voter to learn the public and private record, character and qualification of every non-partisan candidate and then cast his vote with the conscientious feeling of doing his duty as a patriotic citizen and not as a 'good fellow' or organization member."[103]

Its next remark on the subject of non-partisanship was:

"Although the non-partisan bill was created to divorce politics from the judicial and important city offices, partisan sentiment has been allowed to off-set the good which might have been accomplished by having a non-partisan contest in the strictest sense."[104]

It announced the result of the election under the headline:

"Democrats Win in City and County Elections: Socialist in Council . . . The councilmen elected under the new commission form of government are Calvin E. Arner, Democrat; Capt. Charles Spangler, Washington party; and Robert J. Wheeler, Socialist."[105]

After the primary the "Altoona Tribune" merely said that "the primary election held yesterday was the most important in the eyes of the general public ever held in this

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[100]September 18, 1913.
[101]November 3, 1913.
[102]September 17, 1913.
[103]October 22, 1913.
[104]October 29, 1913.
[105]November 5, 1913.

city. It marked the first voting of a non-partisan ticket in the history of the city."[106]

The day before the election the "Eagle" said that "there are many persons who believe that the parties will try and elect the men of their special political faith."[107] On election day the "Eagle" added:

" . . . there was a strong tendency towards partisanship during the closing days and even hours of the campaign, which was not to be overlooked, and the result of the vote is expected to show this to a certain degree at least."[108]

According to the "Gazette" the final election in Pittston resulted in a great victory for the city political machine.

After the primary the "Pottsville Republican" said:

" . . . they (the "ring" Democratic leaders) failed in all of their local scheming, as they failed to name a single man for councilman although they did throw their support to Mortimer for mayor naturally as Democratic as against Conrad, the candidate of the Republican organization. This fact added to the efforts of the local corporations against Conrad, also the support given Mortimer by a certain element of the young people and the saloon crowd resulted in Mortimer, the Democrat, getting a larger vote than Conrad the Republican, and this in consequence is the basis for the declaration that the Democrats carried Pottsville."[109]

A different note was sounded after the election by the "Bradford Era":

"The city of Bradford is to be congratulated on the results of the local election on Tuesday of this week."[110]

On November first the "Meadville Tribune and Republican" thought that "the new plan of municipal government should, therefore, start in Meadville with every point in its favor of being given the most satisfactory trial."

The "Beaver Falls Tribune" gave its unqualified approval of the results of the first non-partisan election in Beaver Falls in these words:

. . . "It was a non-partisan election in fact as well as in name. There

[106]September 17, 1913.
[107]November 3, 1913.
[108]November 4, 1913.
[109]November 4, 1913.
[110]November 5, 1913.

were no emblems or party designations on the ballots and there were no organizations backing any ticket, slate or combination. It was a case of each man for himself from start to finish and there was no forecasting the results before the actual figures were in except the estimate the candidate and his friends put upon his personal strength in each ward."[111]

Summary (1913)

In consideration of the reactions of the press to the non-partisan ballot before it was used in the primary of 1913 we find that of the eight newspapers of cities of the third class quoted, four favored the use of the non-partisan ballot in municipal elections; three of the papers, the "York Dispatch," the "Gazette and Bulletin" of Williamsport, and the "Patriot" of Harrisburg, whole-heartedly favored the non-partisan idea and they believed that the non-partisan ballot would help bring about this spirit of non-partisanship but not a very vigorous one. The "Reading Eagle" and the "Harrisburg Telegraph" never seemed to believe for one instant that the non-partisan ballot would lessen the partisanship in their local campaigns. The "Pittston Gazette" increasingly felt that the non-partisan ballot could not guarantee non-partisanship in the Pittston elections, and the "Erie Dispatch" was doubtful about its value. The "Tribune-Republican" of Scranton was overwhelmingly in favor of it.

After the primary and the election we find a wide range of opinions concerning the part played by the ballot in the municipal campaigns. The Scranton newspaper quoted finds its belief in the non-partisan system vindicated by the election of the man it championed for the office of mayor. The "Harrisburg Patriot's" belief in the value and the effectiveness of the non-partisan ballot is strengthened after observing it in actual operation in Harrisburg. The "Telegraph" of this city is definitely against it and this paper denounces the Democrats for scheming to violate the purpose and spirit of the non-partisan law. The "York Dispatch" is already quite disillusioned concerning the advant-

[111]November 5, 1913.

ages of a ballot without party labels, and it is decidedly annoyed at the Democratic conferences that were held and the number of Democrats elected to council. The "Chester Times," tho aware that certain candidates had machine support, felt that the non-partisan system is superior to the partisan system for the election of candidates to local office. The "Erie Dispatch" thought that party lines are just as strong under one system as under another. The "Allentown Chronicle and News" urged voters to study candidates for themselves without waiting for any official endorsement. It finally declared that partisanship was still rampant. The "Altoona Tribune," and the "Reading Eagle" are noncommital regarding the new ballot. The "Gazette" records another victory for the machine in Pittston and this does not tend to strengthen its belief in ballots without party labels. The "Pottsville Republican" feels no urge to praise the new system and it remains non-committal concerning it. The "Bradford Era" is highly satisfied with the non-partisan ballot, the "Meadville Tribune and Republican" is hopeful and pleased with it, and the "Beaver Falls Tribune" gave it its highest praise. Likewise the "Philadelphia North American" gave the non-partisan ballot its unqualified support and endorsement.

After this ballot had been tried five papers of the group surveyed favor it, six are clearly opposed to it, and one other tends to oppose it and three papers are non-committal in their attitude on the non-partisan system.

The Non-Partisan Primary and Election in 1915

Before the primary of 1915 in Harrisburg, the "Patriot" printed a resolution drawn up at a special meeting of the Democratic city committee. The committee pointed out the fact that the Beidleman machine had placed Lynch, Bowman, and Taylor on its slate as its factional candidates and so directed their movements "that the intent of the Clark Non-Partisan Act has been nullified."[112] The committee

[112]September 2, 1915.

charged the Beidleman councilmen with having forced the city to purchase fire apparatus from the high bidders instead of the low ones, and with having permitted the Harrisburg Light and Power company "to dig up the streets to lay conduits before the ordinance authorizing the work was even introduced into council."[113]

The day before the primary the "Patriot" made this strong plea for non-partisanship:

"Within 24 hours, the electorate of the city will be called upon to make preliminary choice of officers to run their public business. This business has nothing whatever to do with foreign policies, the tariff, or the banking laws. It is concerned purely with the management of Harrisburg and Co., A Municipal Corporation."[114]

This comment was made after the primary:

"Ezra S. Meals, with the united support of all Republican factions, was elected mayor at yesterday's primaries."[115]

A week before the election the "Patriot" had printed an editorial under the caption:

"Gang politicians Bitter Partisans Despite the Law. The whole spirit and purpose of the Clark Act, under which Harrisburg's government is conducted, is non-partisan. The candidates are without party affiliations and the councilmen are expected to act wholly with the city's and not the party's advantage in view. The gang councilmen are always partisan. There is not a transaction in the whole gamut of council's proceedings where partisanship could play a part that is not marked by an effort of the gang to make political capital out of it and strengthen their organization at the expense of the city's efficiency."[116]

The attitude of the "Harrisbug Telegraph" regarding the Republican members of council and the non-partisan ballot is well shown by the following editorial:

" . . . Republicans have about as little respect for the 'non-partisan' scheme as the Democrats and those affiliated with other parties. They make little effort to conceal their impatience. In fact, the non-partisan feature of present day elections is more of a joke than anything else. When an ambitious individual seeks office

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[113]Ibid.
[114]September 20, 1915.
[115]"The Patriot," September 22, 1915.
[116]October 29, 1915.

and fails to receive the endorsement of his own party, he usually announces with a great flourish of trumpets that he is a non-partisan. It sounds impressive and now and then deceives a few people. But the lines in Harrisburg are so clearly drawn in the campaign for the city council that Republicans with very few exceptions, will solidly support those who are not ashamed of their party and willing to go up or down with it."[117]

The "Reading Eagle" is another paper that devoted considerable news space to local primaries and elections during the 1915 campaigns. The "Eagle" made no attempt to secure non-partisanship in local affairs; it reported the facts as it observed them.

According to editorials in the "Tribune" the November election in Altoona was not entirely free from party feeling for one mayoralty candidate was known as a Republican and the other as a Democrat. However, party lines were not as sharply drawn as they were in Reading.[118] The "Gazette and Bulletin" of Williamsport was as strongly opposed to the non-partisan ballot as the "Harrisburg Telegraph." In addition to the "Gazette and Bulletin's" opposition to the non-partisan system it also condemned the commission form of government as provided by the Clark Act. Some of the expressed reasons for this paper's definite opposition to the election system were the following:[119] First, any man can get his name on the primary ballot under the present system. Party primaries would weed out the incompetent candidates. Second, there are so many men running for city office at the non-partisan primary that the vote is scattered and the strength of deserving candidates dissipated. Third, the non-partisan feature confuses the voters, with the result that desirable men are excluded from council. Fourth, lack of some central place where the results of enrollment and personal registration could be recorded. Fifth, no method of obtaining speedy official counts either for nominations or elections. Sixth, cumbersome ballots were used that can not be intelligently marked by the majority of the voters. Sev-

[117]October 29, 1915.
[118]The "Altoona Tribune," November 2, 1915.
[119]"Gazette and Bulletin," September 1915, passim.

enth, the salaries of councilmen should be reduced to one-fourth of their present figure so men will not serve the city solely because of the pay they will receive. Eighth, the unworkable feature of the non-partisan nomination act that provides that a candidate who secures 51 percent of the vote shall be the sole candidate to have his name on the general election ballot is thoroughly unsatisfactory. Finally, the "Gazette and Bulletin" concludes:

"It will be up to the next legislature either to repeal the Clark law entirely and restore the old system or a better one to the third class cities, or to make such amendments as are necessary to fit the law to the needs of the several municipalities effected by its provisions. One of the features of the law that has proven a rank failure is the non-partisan provision."[120]

The "Chester Times" said that the Republican city organization was backing some of the non-partisan candidates in the city[121] and yet it also expressed the idea that the non-partisan ballot was of some value in local elections.

The "Chronicle and News" of Allentown carried the Republican ticket at the mast head of its editorial column and also contained a number of editorials favoring the city and county candidates of the Republican party.[122]

The "Pittston Gazette" declared that all candidates, except one, were nominated following factional lines.[123]

A different opinion was expressed in certain editorials of the "Tribune and Republican" of Meadville regarding the non-partisan feature of the Clark Act. This paper thought that the non-partisan ballot was a valuable addition to the local election system and that it had definitely helped Meadville to secure a "good and efficient council." It further stated that none but the most partisan would deny that good men have been placed in nomination for the city offices. Later it said that the election in Meadville was entirely non-partisan and that is the way it should have been. When national policies were involved large Republican gains

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[120]"Gazette and Bulletin," September 25, 1915.
[121]October 30, 1915.
[122]"Chronicle and News," October and November, 1915, passim.
[123]September 22, 1915.

were reported, but in purely local matters the personality and record of the candidate counted most.[124]

Summary (1915)

The novelty that belonged to both commission government and the non-partisan ballot in 1913 had worn away by 1915, and that is probably one reason why the newspapers in this latter year devoted less space to comment on the value and action of the ballot than they had formerly done. Nine of the papers examined, however, expressed themselves definitely concerning it. Of these, two, the "Harrisburg Patriot"[125] and the "Meadville Tribune and Republican" remained staunchly in favor of the ballot. The Meadville newspaper thought that it was actually fulfilling the people's hopes of it, but the "Patriot" found it impossible to be so optimistic in the face of the facts and politicians in Harrisburg. The "Altoona Tribune", the "Chester Times", and the "Pittston Gazette" did not absolutely oppose the ballot, but when they discussed it they had one eye on the partisanship that was still rampant in their constituencies. The "Harrisburg Telegraph"[126] and "Reading Eagle" the "Gazette and Bulletin" of Williamsport, and the "Chronicle and News" of Allentown were frankly partisan, and reported contests from that viewpoint.

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[124]"Tribune and Republican," September and November, 1915, passim., and November 4, 1915.

[125]The "Harrisburg Patriot," has given more news space and written more editorials about the non-partisan ballot, gang politicians, the partisan or non-partisan character of the local primaries and elections held between 1913 and 1923 than any of the other 16 newspapers that were examined. From the very first it pleaded both eloquently and strenuously for the non-partisan system. The emphasis placed upon these factors is doubtless due, in part at least, to the size and political importance of Harrisburg, the partisan activity in that city and to the further fact that the owner of the "Patriot" is in no way associated with the Republican party in the city, state or nation.

[126]The "Harrisburg Telegraph and the "Reading Eagle" printed many editorials regarding the primary and election campaigns in both the partisan and non-partisan eras. Both of these papers felt that the non-partisan ballot could do little, if anything, to separate partisan politics from their local elections. The "Telegraph" came to feel that the non-partisan ballot was not only futile, but a menace. Other newspapers likewise favored or opposed the non-partisan system but none so persistently as the Democratic "Patriot" and the Republican "Telegraph" of Harrisburg.

The Non-Partisan Primary and Election in 1917

Nineteen hundred and seventeen was a war year, and not a year in which people were greatly interested in politics. With a few exceptions the newspapers in the cities of Pennsylvania gave less attention to the municipal and final election campaigns in this year when America entered the war than in either of the two former years, 1913 and 1915, when the non-partisan ballot was used. Reading and Altoona were outstanding exceptions to this general rule, for in these cities the elections were waged over issues that caused extensive press comment. Our consideration, however, will be given to them in another connection. Here we shall describe the general tenor of the press in a number of cities of Pennsylvania in 1917.

The "Harrisburg Patriot" had little to say during the campaigns of this year. In an editorial after the election it explained the defeat of two worthy men as due to the people's own weakness which prevented them from breaking partisan ties and voting for men regardless of the way in which their own grandfathers would have voted. The "Telegraph" of Harrisburg was more vocal. It denounced the Democratic machine, (1) for trying to secure control of council under a non-partisan screen, (2) for talking about Republican slates when none existed, (3) for ranting loudest against partisanship while at the same time trying to secure partisan success at the polls. The "Telegraph" also condemned the primary law for not arousing general interest in the choice of proper candidates. This paper thought that the law would be radically amended in a short time.[127] On the day before the election the "Telegraph" sounded this warning:

"Voters on the eve of another election are being regaled with the same old guff from the offices of the millionaire boss of the Demo-

[127]"As it (the primary law) stands now it is an invitation to all the demagogues and political misfits to get into the limelight, confusing the voter and making efficient government almost impossible." The "Telegraph",September 19, 1917.

cratic party in Harrisburg and Dauphin county. They are being told that all Republicans are 'gangsters' and all Democrats are patriots. The Republican city and county committees according to the subsidized newspaper of the Democrats are controlled by the 'gang' while the Democratic committee's activities are being directed by the patriotic 'leaders' of the spotless 'Democratic organization.'[128]

On September 12, 1917 the "Chester Times" said that there had been a good test of the sentiment of third class cities of the state toward the laws by which they were governed "at last week's convention of the League of Third Class Cities. The majority sentiment was in favor of retaining the non-partisan method of electing officials and the present form of commission government." The "Times" then added that "the commission form, together with the non-partisan feature, is the best we have yet had, taking the aggregate experience of the cities, and it ought not to be abandoned." However, after the primary and just twelve days later the "Times" said:

". . . It is apparent, judging from returns from almost every section of the state, that instead of taking judgeship and councilmanic contests out of politics it has placed them deeper than ever in the turmoil and strife of partisanship . . . It is next to impossible for an individual to be non-partisan. If he is any kind of a man at all he has his own ideas and follows them accordingly. . . The non-partisan law serves to make a contest doubly expensive for the candidates."[129]

Reading these two statements from the same paper and published within a two-week period one is likely to feel that the truth regarding the value of the non-partisan ballot is difficult to corner.

In an editorial entitled "A Quiet Campaign," the "Chronicle and News" of Allentown said that party lines would be obliterated in a very large measure at the coming election. "Of course, the selection of city councilmen is on a non-partisan ticket but for school director it is a case of Republicans against Democrats, with the advantage decidedly favoring the former."[130] This statement from a paper not

[128]The "Telegraph," November 5, 1917, and September and October, 1917, passim.
[129]September 24, 1917.
[130]October 20, 1917.

friendly to the non-partisan idea is interesting for it seems to indicate, at this time, a belief in the effectiveness of the non-partisan ballot in separating partisan politics from the election of city councilmen.

The "Pittston Gazette" described the primary as the quietest one and the one in which there was the smallest vote cast in a municipal election in many years. There was even less said about the election that followed.

The "Standard" declared that the people of Hazleton were so thoroughly aroused over the primary campaign that they put their stamp of disapproval on the administration by rejecting its head and nominating Alderman Henry Heidenreich for mayor by a tremendous vote. "The fact that many of the agents went thru the wards offering all kinds of money had no effect on the honest voters of this city, who simply were determined to route them and they did, so far as this one nomination was concerned."[131]

The comment of the "Bradford Era" can be summed up in a line, viz., no excitement over the primaries. General apathy had command of local polls.

The day before the primary the "Tribune and Republican" of Meadville said that this local election had no connection with the lines drawn by political parties; that the principles held by Republicans and Democrats had nothing to do with the nominations; local officers were to be chosen on a non-partisan ballot which was free from all party labels and the strictest party man was at liberty to vote for the one he considered best fitted for the office.

Bethlehem became a third class city in 1917 and held its first non-partisan primary and election in that year. The "Globe" of this city said that the election campaign had been a comparatively quiet one and that one of the best known and most progressive citizens of Bethlehem was to be the only candidate for mayor because of his large vote at the primaries. It was partly for this reason that there was little interest in the city ticket; and, it added, the

[131]September 20, 1917.

election campaign has been altogether non-partisan."[132]

Summary (1917)

As we have already said, this year was a quiet one politically for all but two of the cities that the writer studied. The attitude of the newspapers as revealed by the slight amount of material that the press contained was similar in tenor to that which prevailed in 1915. The "Chronicle and News" of Allentown is an exception; it referred to the election of city councilmen as a non-partisan contest in which party lines would be obliterated. This comment is doubtless more the result of the feeling of a moment than a fundamental change in viewpoint about city elections.

The Partisan Primary and Election of 1919[133]

The "Harrisburg Patriot" felt that 90 percent of the cities of the third class in Pennsylvania were absolutely against repeal of the non-partisan ballot, and that all liberals were opposed to this act of the legislature and that only professional politicians were for it. This paper believed that the non-partisan ballot was needed to save certain Pennsylvania cities from gang government. A few days before the primary the "Patriot" made this editorial comment:

"Thanks to a reactionary legislature, municipal elections this year are put back on a partisan basis. This makes the primary an essentially partisan affair. Party men must stay within their own party and choose their candidate from that angle, but even so intelligence must be used and sight not lost of the public welfare."[134]

The "Harrisburg Telegraph" said nothing about the repeal of the non-partisan ballot. At the primary it noted that the mayoralty and city treasurer contests on the Republican ticket aroused the most interest among the voters. Without a single exception, it declared, that the list of candidates sponsored by Mr. Baker, chairman of the candidates' committee, won out by such decisive majorities that they

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[132]November 5, 1917.

[133]The non-partisan ballot was abolished by the legislature in 1919.

[134]September 11, 1919.

would surely win at the election in November. The Democratic totals when compared with the Republican totals were so insignificant that certain defeat was before them at election time.[135] On the day after the election the "Telegraph" announced that the Democrats had failed to gain a single office.

The "Reading Eagle" found that major interest on the Republican ticket this year was caused by the contest for mayor. There were four leading candidates and one would be selected to make the party's fight for mayor against Mr. W. A. Witman, Democrat, and Mr. J. Henry Stump, Socialist, both unopposed at the primary.[136] The final election nearly resulted in a victory for the Socialist candidate and this was due to the fight being made along partisan lines.

"Under the non-partisan ballot law that the machine politicians wiped out during the last session of the legislature, a majority of all the votes was necessary in a city election. The revival of the old partisan law forced the opponents of Socialism into Republican or Democratic groups and played right into the hands of the Socialists here."[137]

Mr. J. H. Stump, the Socialist candidate, is quoted as saying that the election campaign resulted in a fusion between the Republicans and the Democrats to defeat the Socialists. Democratic ward heelers were asking Democratic voters at the polls to vote for the Republican mayoralty candidate:

"We urged a straight ticket vote and we got it. We are satisfied with the support the Socialist party received. The people have spoken and we are now ready for our next campaign. The Socialists start the next campaign today."[138]

According to the "North American" the new partisan law drew a big laugh in Williamsport and "The primary showed that Williamsport voters in spite of a return to the old form of partisan municipal election, have not broken away from

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[135]"And what an outpouring of Republicans it was! How discouraging the figures must be to the Democratic bosses! How pitiful the handful of votes their candidates received as compared with the tremendous totals which the Republicans rolled up." The "Telegraph" September 17, 1919.

[136]September 18, 1919.

[137]The "North American", November 5, 1919.

[138]"Eagle", November 5, 1919.

the non-partisan idea."[139]

Before the Governor signed the non-partisan repealer an observer in Erie was quoted by the "Philadelphia North American" as saying that if the 1919 election were conducted along party lines the Republicans would elect a mayor by 1,200 majority. Red hot Republicanism was in the air and since defeat would be certain the Democrats would not make much of a fight. "Mayor Kitts believes he has at least a 50-50 chance to vindicate his administration in a non-partisan fight but it is understood that he fears a battle along party lines."[140] On primary day the "Erie Dispatch" said that all was ready for the battle at the polls, when candidates for three political parties would be chosen by the voters.[141]

The "Lebanon Daily News" declared the primary campaign in their city to be the most vigorous one waged since Matt Quay stirred the populace to its very foundations. It added that:

"An unusual factor this year is furnished by the new law which places candidates for mayor and city council on partisan tickets for the first time since the act of 1913 provided the commission form of government for third class cities in Pennsylvania. During the six years the law has been in force elections have been on a non-partisan basis, and predictions that the city offices would be made subjects of political contests are being entirely fulfilled in Lebanon as well as in other cities of the state."[142]

The "North American" stated that the new partisan law resulted in a partisan farce, for three city councilmanic candidates captured both the Republican and Democratic nominations and were certain of election in November without a contest. It further said that,

". . . the Wilson law, which strives to erect party barriers between local candidates for office, when as a matter of fact the people know all the candidates and judge them on their personal merits, is held in lower estimation than ever here since this week's demonstration, and

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[139]September 21, 1919.
[140]June 1, 1919.
[141]September 16, 1919.
[142]September 13, 1919.

it has virtually no defenders."[143]

The day before the final election the "Chronicle and News" of Allentown said:

"Don't split your ticket. Stand by every candidate on the ticket. Don't sacrifice your own party to help an opposition man climb into office. Make it an all Republican victory."[144]

The following day a second editorial in the same paper declared that the Republicans had much to rejoice over for altho "party lines were ignored in every district, the voters concentrating on the individual in nearly every instance. It was clearly a case of voting for the man and not the party which is all the more of a compliment to the Republicans who were elected to council and important county offices."[145] One wonders if it would have been a vote for the man and not the party if the Democrats had carried all the offices.

The "Globe" of Bethlehem was of the opinion that the final election was one of the most bitterly fought elections ever held in Bethlehem. "Instead of a non-partisan vote, the recent state law went back to the alignment of party tickets, which has tended to add to the divisions of political thought and activity."[146]

That the "Pittston Gazette" spoke of the election results in terms of political parties is to be expected by anyone at all familiar with the attitude of that paper and the prominence of party lines in Pittston. It is, however, interesting to note that this first city election in which councilmanic and mayoralty candidates were elected on party ballots since 1913 was "In some respects . . . the tamest in many years."[147]

Conclusions 1919

In many of the cities of the third class there were innumerable signs of partisanship while the non-partisan ballot

[143]September 21, 1919.
[144]November 3, 1919.
[145]November 4, 1919.
[146]November 3, 1919.
[147]"Gazette, November 5, 1919.

was being used, but in spite of this partisan activity there usually was an urge to consider the records of the candidate and not his party. Possibly the voter and the newspaper that emphasized the importance of partisanship in local campaigns did so with a feeling that they were acting contrary to a rule that was logical and fair, or a rule that the consensus of opinion in a great number of communities favored. The most interesting fact revealed by an examination of the newspapers in 1919 is the one indicated by the new attitude of some of the most partisan newspapers. All pretense at settling the contest on the basis of ability is cast to the winds, and the voter is urged to vote a straight ticket by the newspapers that had tended to be partisan in the former elections. The idea of non-partisanship has a pale kidney, and when the support of the law was taken away from it the strength of this pale idea was further dissipated; its friends had a harder battle to fight, and the other people could freely appeal for votes on the basis of Republicanism. An ardent supporter of the non-partisan law, the "Harrisburg Patriot", felt that the change that the repealer brought about was real rather than formal, for in the first municipal contest in 1919 it said that the primary was essentially a partisan affair. It would be well to consider a candidate's ability, but there was less reason for doing this now than formerly. The fact that a Socialist was nearly elected mayor of Reading because there were three parties in the contest and the fight was conducted along party lines tells its own story. The "Philadelphia North American" commented upon the presence of non-partisanship in spite of the partisan law; this situation does not change the suggestion that the writer has just made, that is, that there is likely to be more emphasis upon ability and less upon party when a non-partisan ballot is used than when the contest is conducted along party lines.

1921 and 1923

During the years in which the non-partisan ballot was used the municipal campaigns were invariably reported on

the first page of the local newspapers. In 1919, however, there was less news and editorial space devoted to the municipal elections than in 1913 or 1915, and not much more than was reported in 1917. In 1921 and 1923 the election news was in several instances edged off the front page, and the space given to this news was merely a fraction ranging from one-tenth to one-half of the space given to the primary and final election campaigns in 1913 or 1915. This statement would not be true of the "Harrisburg Patriot," and "Telegraph", and the "Chester Times", but even in these newspapers the space given to election news in municipal campaigns was less than the space given to these primaries and elections in the former non-partisan period. And the "Bradford Era", the "Gazette and Bulletin" of Williamsport, the "Reading Eagle", the "Meadville Tribune and Republican", the "Altoona Tribune", and the "Lebanon News" were strikingly devoid of political news during these years.[148]

There was not only less municipal election news in the papers in this latter period, but this news was of a different quality. Formerly partisanship was commented upon, but in this period the presence of non-partisanship, or a willingness to cut one's party ticket in a municipal campaign was noted.[149]

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[148]The "Erie Dispatch", the "Pittston Gazette", the "Pottsville Republican", and the "Beaver Falls Tribune" were not examined for this later period.

[149]The following material may be regarded as representative: The "Harrisburg Telegraph" credits the organization leaders with winning every place, save one, on a primary ticket bearing a long list of entries. The vote was large. It proceeds: "The Democrats, on the other hand, made a pitiful showing at the polls." (September 19, 1921). This paper later described the election as a field day for the Republicans saying that they won the offices by majorities that ranged as high as four to one in their favor (November 9, 1921.) The "Meadville Tribune and Republican" declared that there was little party regularity observed in the election and that it was a contest of personalities but remarked that the city council would be entirely Republican for the next two years—" this will be the first time in the city's history, it is said, that any party held all the seats in council." (November 9, 1921). In 1923 this newspaper found the view strongly held that the Republicans would be placed in office by big majorities and that many voters would vote a straight ticket. (November 5, 1923).

Conclusions

The press reflected the variety of opinion that one finds in a group of individuals as well as in a group of newspapers. The attitude of the newspapers in Pennsylvania regarding the non-partisan ballot during the period in which it was used was in many important respects the same as the attitude of other interest groups thruout the state. Certain newspapers were positively in favor of this system both before it was tried, and in 1919, after it had been abolished by the legislature; a larger number favored the non-partisan ballot in 1913, and then without regret saw it pass from the scene in 1919. Still other newspapers took no definite stand for or against the ballot before it was tried in 1913; some of these newspapers clearly opposed it after the first primary or election, and others continued to report or largely ignore political campaigns without expressing an opinion concerning the value of the ballot. The papers that opposed it from the very beginning were few in number. An examination of the files of 16 newspapers in 14 cities of the third class failed to reveal one paper that was opposed to the principle before it was tried. However, questionnaire evidence leads the writer to believe that at least two papers were always opposed to the use of the non-partisan ballot in local elections; and at the end of the six years' trial only a few, notably the "Harrisburg Patriot" and the "Meadville Tribune and Republican," still sponsored the non-partisan idea with the old time vigor. Six years was, of course, too short a time to rid the state of partisanship in city elections. The majority of the papers seemed either frankly skeptical and partisan, or very soon disillusioned.

The stand that a particular newspaper took on the question may of course have been determined by one of several factors. In certain cases the fortune of a paper and the fortune of a party organization were so closely related that they were as one; if candidates of this organization were elected, the non-partisan ballot would be praised; if they were defeated, it would be condemned as something imprac-

tical, and contrary to the political nature of man. In either case the praise or blame might not bear any direct relationship to the extent to which the non-partisan ballot did the one thing for which it was adopted; viz., to help the voters to choose candidates solely on the basis of their individual merit.

Many editors and other persons who wrote about the non-partisan ballot compared it with the absolute, the ideal ballot, instead of asking themselves whether this was the ballot best suited to the needs of a municipality. This ballot must be considered in the light of alternatives, rather than judged by some abstract standard that has no place in actual municipal contests in which parties are virile and the individual looks with pride upon his association with a party.

The statement is sometimes made that the non-partisan ballot is inherently weak because a partisan contest is needed to arouse the interest of the voters. Man is by nature partisan, and newspapers are partisan as well, and neither will be greatly concerned over the outcome of an election in which parties are supposed to play no part.[150] A person who believes this has probably not observed local elections in Pennsylvania in which non-partisan ballots were used. For in these election contests, campaigns were waged with at least as much vigor and intensity as have since marked certain fierce struggles in which party ballots are used. People are naturally more interested in personalities than in traditional party principles, and that is one reason why factional fights within a party are as animated and often as bitter as conflicts between opposing parties. Man is not neutral; he wants to take sides and fight for someone or something in order that his side may win. He has that opportunity, however, in an election in which ballots without party labels are used.

There are certain questions that ought to be answered regarding the part played by the press in the primaries and

[150] A comparison of the total number of votes cast for mayoralty candidates in both the non-partisan and the partisan periods fails to disclose more interest in one type of election than in the other. See pages 168-169.

elections in which the non-partisan ballot was used.

First: Did the papers clearly explain the non-partisan idea to the electorate? The majority of them did explain it to the public adequately before the 1913 election—notably the "Harrisburg Patriot", the "York Dispatch", the "Erie Dispatch", the "Gazette and Bulletin" of Williamsport, and the "Chester Times". During the six-year period of the use of the ballot, the "Patriot" continued to explain and champion the cause, and to keep it before the public.

Secondly: Did the papers give important reasons for the logical use of a non-partisan ballot in local elections, and a party ballot in national elections? The "Patriot" was about the only one that made that particular distinction, tho plenty of newspapers gave good reasons for the use of the ballot in the selecting of municipal officials.

Thirdly: Did the press tend to mould public opinion for or against the non-partisan ballot, or was it non-committal on the subject? Before the 1913 election, the press almost without exception made a distinct effort to mould opinion in favor of the ballot. After the election there was a new alignment of forces, the majority of papers finally uniting in a fairly definite opposition to the ballot, either positively, or through their criticism of its ineffectualness in obliterating partisanship from the elections.

Fourthly: Did the press comment more on the significance and presence of the Republican, Democratic, and Socialist parties in the years 1919 to 1923, when party ballots were used, than in the years 1913 to 1919, when elections were conducted under the non-partisan system? The "Harrisburg Telegraph", and the "Reading Eagle" could scarcely have been more frankly partisan than they were thruout the entire non-partisan period, but after this ballot had been abolished they manifested a somewhat greater freedom of expression for they now saw no reason why a person should go outside of his party in voting for municipal candidates; but a number of other papers were more or less successfully non-partisan during the six years. After the ballot was discarded they became more partisan again, tho

traces of the education in non-partisanship still remained.

Section B

In addition to the writer's examination of newspaper files he further investigated the attitude of the press by sending out questionnaires and letters to the newspapers in the cities of the third class of Pennsylvania. Forty-seven questionnaires and self-addressed stamped envelopes were sent to editors in order to ask them the following four questions:

"When in 1913 to 1919 the non-partisan ballot was used in your city primaries and elections—

1. Was the character of the candidates' appeal to the voters for support at the polls partisan or non-partisan?
2. Were the successful candidates often supported by party organizations? . . . a. Sometimes? . . . b. Usually? . . . c. Always?
3. Do you think that in a non-partisan election the minority party has a better chance of electing its men than in an election wherein the regular party ballot is used?

If possible, please give concrete examples in answer to the above.

4. What particular defects have you noticed in the non-partisan method of nomination and election of city officials? . . . What advantages?

Fourteen of the 47 newspapers made some sort of a reply and the remaining 33 newspapers did not acknowledge in any way the inquiry sent to them.

The answer to all but the fourth question will be given in the following table:

I[151]		II			III	
Partisan	Non-Partisan	Sometimes	Usually	Always	Yes	No
4	8	4	1	9	8	5

Nine of the newspaper questionnaire answers said that the defects in the non-partisan system of nomination and election of city officials far outweigh the advantages in importance and five newspapers believed the advantages defin-

[151]The numbers 1, 2, and 3 refer to the first three questions on the questionnaire. The views expressed in reply to the fourth question follow the table.

itely over-balance the defects. Those papers[152] that emphasized the defects of the non-partisan ballot thought that, first, it opened the field to candidates who had no fitness for office; second, the candidates elected without party support were responsible to no one; third, the party responsibility was lacking altho it is necessary for good government, and fourth, capable men would often refuse to get into the scramble for office. A Lebanon paper said:

"Men will do anything to be elected and make poor officials as they do not have proper higher ups to take orders from."

The "Chester Republican" definitely stated its position in these words:

"Speaking of this locality only, the non-partisan method would be of no benefit, for the reason that all methods are worked to the advantage of the regular Republican organization. Nothing else could live long here, politically speaking. Hardly any one votes at election who is not identified with the organization—they always vote and always stand pat to the organization. I am a Republican organization man, but am giving you the facts."

Those newspapers[153] that favored the non-partisan ballot believed that first, it brought out a better class of men; second, good men of the minority parties were more apt to become candidates for municipal office; and third, business efficiency rather than political subserviency was the determining principle in election of candidates. In the opinion of the "Patriot":

"Harrisburg was the better for having had non-partisan elections of its municipal officers. The principle did not function 100 percent, it did not eliminate either from the electorate or the proceedings of the council every trace of partisanship, but just at the time the plan was abandoned through repeal of the law it was making for a better civic spirit. . . .

"While it was probably true that bigoted partisan sentiment in this community still favors partisan government in municipal affairs, it is none the less true that a very considerable sentiment is for non-

[152]The "Chester Republican," "Meadeville Tribune," two Lebanon newspapers, "Connellsville Courier," a Monongahela newspaper, the "Wilkes Barre Times Leader," the "Williamsport Sun," and the Harrisburg Telegram."

[153]The "Harrisburg Patriot," the "McKeesport News," the "Altoona Mirror," the "Wilkes Barre Record," and the "Hazleton Plain Speaker."

partisan control and undoubtedly that sentiment would have increased had the repeal of the law not checked it."

Several months later the writer sent letters to 58 newspapers in cities of the third class, including those of the 47 papers that had not answered his former questionnaire, as well as 25 newspapers that had not been written to before. The letters asked two questions: whether the recipient had been for or against the non-partisan ballot in his city elections (a) in 1913, when the law was first introduced, and (b) in 1919, when the system was abolished. Ten replies were received from these papers within the next three weeks.[154] The writer then secured the full co-operation of the editor of one of the outstanding newspapers in Pennsylvania. This editor sent a second questionnaire and an urgent request to his 48 fellow editors. However, in spite of this appeal from one of the brotherhood only four additional letters were forthcoming. Thus the total number of replies received was 14. Two of these replies were from newspapers that took no stand on the non-partisan ballot, and one reply was from a man who had not been in the United States when Pennsylvania used the non-partisan ballot and he could not say what the attitude of his newspaper had been concerning it. Six newspapers were unqualifiedly in favor of the use of the non-partisan ballot in municipal elections and one newspaper thought it was a gesture in the right direction but, "Democracy must be rescued in Pennsylvania by more heroic means." Another newspaper was of the opinion that the use of the non-partisan ballot had made no difference in Johnstown. "Questions of ability and

[154]In order to compare the interest of these 53 newspaper editors in some live current question with their interest in the non-partisan ballot, a letter was prepared under the writer's direction and sent to these same 58 editors. This letter asked the editor whether or not he favored the Volstead Act as it now is, or believed that it should be modified to permit the sale of light wines and beers. Thirty-one editors, or 53 percent of those written to, answered this question about the Volstead Act. One editor enclosed an editorial nearly a column long which had been written and published because he had been asked these two questions about the Volstead Act. If one compares the 53 percent of the Volstead Act replies with the 17 percent non-partisan ballot replies, he is bound to feel that there is definitely more editorial interest in the one subject than in the other.

fitness figured in the situation about as much as, and certainly not more than, they had figured under the strict party system." Three newspapers were completely opposed to the non-partisan ballots in their municipal elections.

In considering the concrete reasons expressed for the various opinions held by the different newspapers regarding the non-partisan ballot we find the following among those given. The "Evening News" of Wilkes Barre favors this system of voting for,

"Through its operation, we believe that better men are selected for all important posts since intelligence and ability are not sacrificed on the altar of party affiliation."

The "Du Bois Express" is in favor of the non-partisan ballot because it believes that:

"The system is particularly preferable in any locality where one party greatly predominates in numbers. . . . It allows the hidebound element to vote for a choice of candidates and not simply for a party nominee."

The "Freie Presse" (Johnstown) was in favor of the non-partisan ballot and opposed to the repeal of the law.

"Our reason for this was that we thought the voters would pay more attention to the respective candidates' character and qualities for office than if swayed by blind partisan motives.

"The non-partisan ballot system was not in operation long enough to give it a fair trial, but since only the professional politicians were opposed to it I believe that the great majority of voters considered it an improvement over the old system."

The "Carbondale Leader" was in favor of the non-partisan ballot in 1913 when the law was passed and also in 1919 when it was abolished. It believed that:

"The city council which was elected in 1913 was the most satisfactory we have ever had and its quality was contributed to very largely by the fact that the voting was non-partisan although the main improvement in municipal government was more largely due to the form of government given us under the Clark Act which abolished the many membered bi-cameral council. The only trouble with the non-partisan ballot was that we did not have it long enough to eliminate partisanship. . . A few years longer would have served to break down the partisan lines, which we say characterized the line up of councilmanic action frequently."

The editor of the "Pennsylvania Labor Herald" of Allentown, says that:

". . . Organized labor as well as the "Pennsylvania Labor Herald," was in favor of the non-partisan ballot from its very beginning and opposed the bill which abolished it in 1919.

"The reason we favored the act was because it gave the independent candidate a chance which he did not have under the party ballot and which is controlled by the machine-politicans.

"The first year of its operation, labor was successful in electing one of its men to city council, namely, R. J. Wheeler. Mr. Wheeler was responsible for cleaning up the city owned water department, which for years was used as a political dumping ground at the expense of the citizens, and for the first time it was run in an efficient manner and for the benefit of the tax-payers.

"Other candidates who were elected at that time on the non-partison ballot showed far more of an independent spirit than they do now or even did before the act. The number of candidates were more numerous and the independent voter was given a chance to express his wishes at the primary election as well as the general."

The "Lock Haven Express" favored the non-partisan system for:

"When the elective positions were divorced from partisan politics, a higher class of citizens in most instances responded to serve the people. Whereas under the partisan system any persons with a 'pull' with the political powers that be usually become candidates and their competency for the office is not always the first consideration."

The "Express" then cited a concrete case to show the importance of the party label in Lock Haven.[155]

The "Johnstown Democrat" was one of the two newspapers that answered the writer's letter with the statement that the non-partisan ballot made no real difference in the

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[155]"Six years ago Robert H. Lauth, who had served as city treasurer by appointment of the city council, was a candidate for re-election on the Democratic ticket. It was conceded on all sides that during his administration he had been the most capable and obliging. Therefore, the Republican organization decided not to name a candidate against him. But a dissolute, uncouth individual was given a few votes for city treasurer on the Republican ticket—along with the "Andy Gump joke" order. The few votes gave this chap the Republican nomination and as the city is overwhelmingly Republican and since many voters of that party took it for granted the candidate was a reputable citizen as he had a family name common and respected in this city, the Republican 'joker' nominee somewhat jarred the over-confidence of Lauth's friends when he came within four votes of being elected."

outcome of the local elections in which it was used. It added:

"The non-partisan ballot was not in operation long enough for a really fair test. My personal opinion, which is based less on an observation of facts than on my knowledge of human nature, is that there 'ain't no sich animile' as non-partisanship. Locally I believe nominations and elections were determined along party lines as before and since.

"My own personal interest is in proportional representation, which I deem of far greater importance than any other electoral reform . . . Under the existing system most Democrats in this state and most Republicans in Virginia would just as well poke their ballots into a rat hole as to deposit them in the sacred urn."

The "News Standard" of Uniontown, the other newspaper in this group of two that thought that the non-partisan ballot made no difference in the election results said that:

"In 1913 I was heartily for it (the non-partisan ballot) and in 1919 absolutely indifferent toward it. It seemed to fail utterly of its purpose.

"The theory of the non-partisan ballot is fine. In practice it did not work out as its advocates thought. I found the ruling political machine controlling non-partisan elections as easily as partisan ones. Such things as the non-partisan ballot are merely gestures in the right direction. Democracy must be rescued in Pennsylvania by more heroic means."

The "News Standard" adds that the political life of the community is so controlled by the ruling Republican machine that a minority party can not exist. The domination of this machine is due to the existence of a large number of ignorant and irresponsible voters, mostly colored.

"It is useless to talk of election reform so long as it is possible to marshall this heavy drab vote and use it to decide elections. . . . There is only one remedy for this condition. The voting qualifications must be increased to such an extent that the franchise shall be limited to the intelligent and responsible vote. Then the exercise of the franchise by this class of voters must be made compulsory by law."[156]

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[156]Other reasons given for the "News Standard's" dissatisfaction with present conditions are: "We had a strike in this region in 1922. The H. C. Frick Coke company, which is the fuel end of the United States Steel, imported upward of 10,000 miners to break the strike. Ninety percent of these were negroes mobolized in the South. Long before this mass had resided in the state the prescribed year the machine had entered their names on the voting lists—clearly illegal. In one district we went into court and had 93 names knocked off. In

In reply to the writer's letter of inquiry the editor of the "Gazette and Bulletin" of Williamsport sent a printed editorial based on a recent article in "Harpers" magazine by Frank R. Kent. The article was about the political decline of America. The editorial was opposed to the direct primary and proceeded to say that:

> The percentage (of voters) was far better before the non-partisan law went into effect. It would be better today under a return to the definite party policy."

A newspaper that does not want its name quoted is opposed to the non-partisan system, for it does not provide organized rivalry which is conducive to efficiency. "We now have the individual effort and the benefit of party and other organized movements whereas in the non-partisan period we had the former only."

The "Oil City Blizzard" was not opposed to the repeal of the non-partisan ballot in cities of the third class in Pennsylvania in 1919. It felt, however, that,

> "The non-partisan act really was not in effect in third class cities long enough to afford a complete demonstration of its workings. When the third class city act went into effect, many good men were attracted as candidates for office on the basis solely of the opportunities afforded for community service."

The repeal of the non-partisan system came before there was an opportunity to judge the public's attitude toward

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(Footnote continued)

this place we had no public support, either moral or financial. Most of that ignorant and irresponsible voting mass is still here. In certain townships where there is independent opposition, the Frick company usually operating with the ruling Republican machine pays the poll taxes of these voters—also clearly illegal. But the trouble is that our prosecutors and courts themselves elected by these means, have no disposition to prosecute or punish these crimes against the ballot. Yet with the total vote in this county approximately 40,000 it may be easily seen that the ignorant and irresponsible vote of this one corporation alone makes up 25 percent of the total vote. If we are to tolerate conditions such as this, all the non-partisan legislation we can enact will not help a bit. . . .

"I would not hesitate to state that one-fifth of the election boards in Pennsylvania are absolutely criminal and that through their operation a material percentage of the good voters of this state are totally disfranchised."

the men elected under it, "hence it is difficult to say whether the standard has been materially affected one way or another by the change." The "Blizzard" believes that when the non-partisan ballot is used it tends to develop unidentified political parties whereas it believes that a healthy competition for nominations within the parties themselves would tend to improve municipal conditions more than anything else.

Conclusions

Of these replies to the first group of the questionnaires, the majority tended on the whole to oppose the use of the non-partisan ballot, inasmuch as the editors who answered felt that the defects in the system outweighed its advantages. In spite of the fact that, in the opinion of eight of the papers, the minority party had an improved chance of getting elected under the non-partisan system, they felt, in a ratio of nine to five, that partisanship went on just the same, but parties were robbed because of the irresponsibility of the men elected.

The papers that favored the non-partisan ballot asserted that a better class of men had been elected on it, that the minority did have a better chance, and that business efficiency in city management was of more concern when the non-partisan system was used than were political gains and party spoils.

The second group of answers is more solidly in favor of the non-partisan system. Six of them definitely approved of the system, four were chiefly non-committal, and three were positively opposed to it.

The non-partisan advocates were confident that better men could be chosen under their system because better men were willing to run, and a wider field was open in the matter of choosing officials. They felt that the voters tended to be more careful when they were selecting non-partisan candidates. They also felt that "pull" had far less chance of being effective in a non-partisan election, that the voters really preferred that sort of election, and that the inde-

pendents and minority party men had a real chance of nomination and election on a non-partisan ballot.

The partisan group felt that the non-partisan ballot had not made any real differences during the time it was used, and that in many places a minority party had no chance anyway. There was also the stand that non-partisan elections did not supply sufficient organized rivalry, and that for that reason people were not interested in running on a non-partisan ballot.

7. THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE ON THE NON-PARTISAN BALLOT[157]

In order to find out the attitude of the chambers of commerce in Pennsylvania on the non-partisan municipal ballot, letters[158] were sent asking them whether or not this ballot separated partisan politics from their primaries and elections and whether or not more capable men were elected to office while it was used than are now elected under the partisan system.

Twenty-two of these chambers of commerce failed to make any sort of an answer. One of the eight that replied was unaware of the fact that the non-partisan ballot had been used in his city, Butler. Two others either knew nothing about the non-partisan ballot, or knew little about it, for they secured information concerning it before writing.

From Oil City, word came that, "the non-partisan nomination and election of city officials was considered a failure."[159] In the judgment of the Reading chamber of commerce the non-partisan ballot was received there in 1913 with a good deal of favor, and there were some local protests against its repeal in 1919, but it "did not bring any de-

[157]This material is chiefly important because of the light it throws upon the chambers of commerce interest, or rather lack of interest in this electoral device. This might also serve as an indication as to the interest of the more general public in the non-partisan ballot.

[158]Thirty letters were sent to those cities in which the non-partisan ballot had been used.

[159]Letter to writer, April, 1924, from Oil City chamber of commerce.

cided blessing to this or other communities altho it is possible that one reason for this is the short time that it was in use."[160]

The Williamsport and McKeesport chambers of commerce are of the opinion that "there is no difference in the type of men chosen under the non-partisan ballot and the partisan ballot."[161]

And the former adds:

"The only hope I have for the election of the best qualified men to city offices is by reducing the salary to the point that it is not sufficient for the officeholder to live on, then and only then can you get the best qualified men to seek those offices as a public duty."[162]

The Johnstown chamber of commerce did not think that the non-partisan ballot was given long enough trial to determine its defects or advantages. The New Castle board of trade said that more capable men were elected to office under the non-partisan system than under the present partisan system, but then it added that this method of election possessed neither defects nor advantages. The one chamber of commerce that took a stand definitely for the non-partisan system was in Lebanon. In its judgment the non-partisan ballot produced a better class of candidates for the voter to choose from.

" . . . better men are attracted for office who belong to the minority party, and good men of the majority party are attracted to office who do not wish to be under obligations to the political leaders who ordinarily shape up the primary ticket.[163]

"In those cases where the men elected are not more capable than those elected under the present system they are generally more independent of party and organization influences, which of course are detrimental to civic betterment."[164]

After sending the letters to the chambers of commerce and failing to get any response from the great majority of them, the writer talked with a state official of this organi-

[160]Letter to writer, March, 1924.
[161]Letter to writer, April, 1924, from Williamsport chamber of commerce.
[162]Ibid.
[163]Letter to writer, April, 1924, Lebanon chamber of commerce.
[164]Ibid.

zation regarding what might seem to be a lack of both interest and information on the non-partisan ballot. However, this official said that it was possible that the local secretaries of the several chambers of commerce were afraid to write for fear that they might incur the ill will of certain economic and party interests that give them financial and other backing. This feeling of fear lest they offend some powerful interest group or person has been frequently met with during interviews and in correspondence with people who have been associated with the non-partisan ballot. However, in this instance the writer is inclined to believe that a lack of concrete information accounts for the small number and meagerness of the replies. The non-partisan ballot had been used seven years before the writer's letter reached the secretaries, and other officials were never clearly interested in this type of ballot, or the campaigns in which it was used. Some of them might have been interested in 1913, 1915, or 1917 but have now forgotten it. Whether the cause is fear or indifference one is probably safe in saying that the chambers of commerce in the third class cities of Pennsylvania have no real concern in the non-partisan ballot.

8. INTERVIEWS

In addition to writing letters and sending questionnaires to candidates and other persons familiar with local politics in Pennsylvania, the writer sought out individuals who had some special knowledge of the operation of the non-partisan ballot in one or more cities, and talked with them, in order to secure their first-hand impressions of this method of nomination and election. Some of the persons interviewed were willing to talk, and were most positive in the views they expressed, altho they would completely ignore any number of written requests for information. Perhaps some of this group found difficulty in giving written expression to their ideas; or perhaps they needed personal contact before their attention could be captured. To some people a letter and a questionnaire about the non-partisan ballot is a pale and lifeless thing, and if it does not stir the memory of

some event in their own experience, they will feel no need for responding to it; or again there is something final and permanent about the written word, and some people will not risk a letter. Probably the most significant fact about an interview is that here the writer can continually see the person that he is questioning, and his questions can be selected according to the attitude, the expression, and the response of the person interviewed. There is no rigid outline that must be followed. The questions may be adapted to draw out ideas and information and one answer may lead to another question, and this discussion method may make for a fuller expression of the facts than a more formal method could possibly do. In discussion one is likely to answer the question and reveal his true position rather than plan out what he ought to say to defend a certain position.

Some of the typical and representative interviews follow:

Reading

An independent Republican in Reading, who has for many years been associated with the Allied Civic Bodies and the League of Cities of the Third Class, and who was mayor of his city before the Clark Act was passed, is very definitely in favor of the non-partisan ballot. He said, however, that it did not receive a fair trial in Reading. The attitude of the newspapers there was wrong. They weakened the effect of the non-partisan ballot. They continually played up a man's politics and would not permit a candidate to stand as a non-partisan. For instance, in 1915, Filbert, a Democrat, ran for mayor; he was not a capable person, but was a strong party man. He was opposed by George W. Jones, another Democrat, who was a person of great ability, but more of an independent than a strong partisan. The newspapers played up Filbert's politics and he was elected. Of course, if they had emphasized the obvious fact that a man's politics do not matter, but his training and business experience do, Jones would have been made mayor.

The politicians were opposed to the non-partisan system from the very first. It was never given a fair show. The League of Third Class Cities had to fight against repeal every year and the committee was finally overthrown fighting. The politicians and the newspapers prevented the people from being informed concerning the purpose of a non-partisan ballot. It should have been tried for 20 years, then people could have told whether it would work or not. The people must be educated up to it. It cannot work as long as voters consider politics to be the great American sport. Their attitude regarding elections must change and the newspapers must help bring about this change. The crux of the whole matter is the training of the people; they must be trained up to it, for the important thing is the people, not the law.

The Republican state organization chiefs were opposed to the non-partisan ballot and brought about its repeal. Harrisburg, Chester, McKeesport and Williamsport worked for repeal. Commission government amounts to little now that the most precious part of it is taken from it. In fact, since the non-partisan ballot is gone, a city manager type of government would be better than the present one.[165]

A Republican, who was the city clerk of Reading while the non-partisan ballot was used and who now holds a federal office, believes that 70 per cent of the voters will pick the best man if there are no party names on the ballot, for without this name or label only 25 or 30 percent of the voters can tell the party a candidate belongs to. At the election the vote is in a way non-partisan, for it is secret, but it is not secret at the primary. In 1913 the personality of candidates was what determined the outcome of the election. In 1915 William Witman and the Democratic party organization said appointments were the issue. Witman said, "You (Democrats) can't get appointed unless you elect Democrats to the commission." Even certain Democratic policemen took an active part in the campaign and worked for Witman as a Democrat. No finer man ever walked in

[165]Interview with writer, February, 1924.

shoe leather than George M. Jones. He was active in charitable work and civic affairs and yet he was defeated by more than 3000 votes because of this appointment issue. His victorious opponent was Filbert, a strong party man. B. F. Ruth and McConnell were both elected because the non-partisan ballot was used.[166]

A paint manufacturer, who was elected to Reading's first commission and to the two succeeding ones under the non-partisan system, thinks that there is only one ballot for the people and that is the one without any reference to parties on it. The first council stood three Republicans and two Democrats. He said to his colleagues in council, "Let us not forget that we have been elected on a non-partisan ballot, and we must act in a non-partisan manner regarding appointments." He was then in the majority and men were not removed from office solely because they were Democrats. Later, when he was one of the minority, he reminded the council of his former attitude and in 1915 his Republicans were not thrown out. The commissioners were very fair. When party ballots were used in 1919 a new spirit straightway made itself felt among the councilmen—they now had the feeling that to the victor belong the spoils of office. Proof of this attitude might be had by examining the minutes of the council. The record of councilmanic appointments will afford abundant proof.

He was a progressive in 1912, a bolter, and he would never have been elected had he been forced to depend solely on Republicans. About 40 percent of his support came from Democrats. He is 71 years old and he has gone thru ten campaigns for school board and has served on it and in council for 26 years. He has served twice on investigating committees for the city and he was treasurer of the ninth house sewer district. He has had much experience campaigning. During his 26 years of service for the city he never sold them any paint and consequently he lost considerable business and profit. He now sells the city several thousand dollars' worth of paint a year. It has cost him money to

[166]Interview with writer, April, 1926.

serve the city.

Lieutenant Governor Beidleman was the one responsible for the repeal of the non-partisan ballot. He was a resident of Harrisburg and he did not like the way the ballot worked there[167]

Mr. J. H. Stump, who is one of the two main leaders of the Socialists in Reading, is opposed to the non-partisan ballot. He said, however, that the newspapers were fair during the non-partisan ballot period, except in 1917 when they tried to scare the voters with the red flag. The Socialist candidates were not nominated in 1913. The Socialist party ran a sticker campaign and polled 2600 votes whereas their normal strength then was about 4000. The Socialists failed in the primary because they were not accustomed to vote in primaries and did not vote in this one, altho in later ones they voted. When party primaries are held the Socialist voters do not need to vote, as the candidates are nominated by the organization. The non-partisan ballot cost the Socialists more for they had two campaigns to go through while it was used. He is opposed to this type of ballot because the political organizations supported candidates when it was used and every candidate nominated had the backing of some party organization. The law would not have been repealed if it had not effected party organizations, yet the Socialist party organization was at its best in 1915, right in the center of the non-partisan period.[168]

Albert Rothemer, chairman of the Democratic county committee, said that the non-partisan ballot was a fizzle in Reading. He firmly believes in party government and he thinks that people ought to affiliate with parties. In a non-partisan election the candidate has no one to support him and everyone kicks him.[169]

Mr. Ira Kutz, a lawyer who is often actively interested in politics, held the opinion that the non-partisan ballot was not very popular and did not bring about the expected re-

[167]Interview with writer, April, 1925.
[168]Interview with writer, March, 1925.
[169]Interview with writer, March, 1925.

forms. He favored its repeal. During the campaigns in which it was used people would support candidates of their own party, but after the candidates were elected they would be responsible to no one; besides, party affiliations were always known. It was made known by politicians. The law did not bring about non-partisanship.[170]

Mr. Zellar, the editor of the "Reading Eagle", said that the success of a non-partisan ballot in a given community depends upon the number of independents in the community. There are a large number of independents in Reading. Many there split their ticket. The non-partisan ballot helped the voter consider the merit of candidates regardless of party. The politicians soon realized this and they lined up against the non-partisan system from the start. Here the non-partisan ballot did just exactly what the law intended it to do. It elected men to office because of their ability and regardless of their standing with the organization. Ruth always fought the organization; in a non-partisan fight he could win but not in a partisan fight. Stauffer had great personal popularity and he drew the independent vote of both parties and was elected even when party ballots were used; however, he would have won more easily had non-partisan ballots been used.

Every independent voter in Reading was sorry to see the non-partisan ballot go. People do not like to state their party affiliation especially when it is that of Socialist. They liked the non-partisan ballot because they could vote for councilmen without stating their party. There is no doubt but that there was less partisanship in the non-partisan period than there is now in the partisan period.[171]

Chester

There is only one party in Chester and that is the Republican party. The undisputed leader of its organization, and it has a powerful one, is John J. McClure. He is a successful business man and he is interested in banks and utility companies. He is a graduate of Swarthmore college,

[170]Interview with writer, March, 1925.
[171]Interview with writer, April, 1925.

where he once studied party politics, and he told the writer that he now knows more about the subject than he did then. He expressed the orthodox attitude of the true organization man on the non-partisan ballot. Our government since the beginning has been run by parties, not personalities or blocs. A national party can only be a success when it is supported by parties of the same kind in the smaller divisions such as state, county and city. Anything that has a tendency to destroy or weaken the understructure of parties, weakens parties in the national field. The non-partisan ballot was destructive, it destroyed all party government in cities. National parties cannot be supported without local ones.

Political patronage is essential to the running of a party. The offices in the city are important. The party needs patronage of people employed—patronage is a very significant factor. "If I owned all the railroads in this country I could be president forever because the employees working for me would always vote for me." Politics is a business. Men must devote their time to broadcasting their ideas. You cannot have an organization without these active politicians any more than you can have a church organization without a preacher.

When the non-partisan ballot is used each man has a party or following of his own. He is likely to be worse than a party man. A man is less stable than a party, for men change, but a party continues in power forever.[172]

Mayor Turner of Chester was formerly editor of the "Chester Times" and he has long been associated with city politics. He is a strong party man and he seems to believe that whatever hurts the organization of his party, injures the cause of good government. He made the following assertions without being willing to discuss any of them at great length. The non-partisan ballot defeated party policy at the polls. It broke up party regularity, and it was against the city government and the organization. The foundation of our government rests on the party system. The non-partisan ballot tended to break organization control and

[172]Interview with writer, February, 1924.

opened the door to all candidates. It was a destructive measure.[173]

T. Woodward Trainer, the secretary of the chamber of commerce of Chester, was elected to the commission in 1917 when the non-partisan ballot was used and again in 1919 when party ballots were used. He was opposed by the organization in both fights. He says that the non-partisan ballot greatly helped him in 1917. He won in 1919 on party ballots, but he won by a small majority and made a harder fight. Unquestionably all municipal elections should be on a non-partisan basis. The value of the non-partisan ballot is shown by the nature of the opposition to it. It helped the anti-machine voters concentrate their vote and cast it where it would count most. The party label inevitably causes some anti-machine voters to cast votes for machine candidates merely because they have the benefit of the party label. This vote is diminished by a ballot without a party name or emblem. Trainer is a Republican in national affairs and an Independent in local affairs. He argued with Max Leslie before the senate against the repeal of the non-partisan ballot. He also discussed it with Governor Sproul, who said that it was unsound in theory. Reforms in a political party should take place within the party itself, "if we are rotten, we have got to clean house."[174]

Allentown

An Allentown man, who was in the 1919 session of the legislature and voted against the repeal of the non-partisan ballot, is now inclined to be opposed to it. In 1919 the Allentown council passed a resolution in favor of it, yet he now believes it is a good thing that Allentown has partisan primaries and elections again. If a man is elected on a non-partisan ballot, who can you hold responsible? Organization is necessary in city elections. It creates sentiment and brings out the vote. The non-partisan ballot makes organization difficult; it also causes an undue number of men to run for office. Some men were elected solely because

[173]Interview with writer February, 1924.
[174]Interview with writer, February, 1924.

their name began with "A". Arner got in because of this, although he was a man of real value. In Allentown the parties are equally divided. The non-partisan ballot might have worked better if one party was predominently in the saddle; where the party organization was strong the assemblymen voted for repeal.[175]

Senator Horace W. Schantz, who is the chairman of the Republican county committee in Allentown, was active in bringing about the repeal of the non-partisan ballot. He said that it was repealed because it was useless in Allentown just as it was useless everywhere else it had been tried. It was a fool idea. Government is based on parties. If people are to give up this idea of party responsibility they will be lost. The only ones who favor the non-partisan ballot are Socialists and reformers. It is bad, useless and worthless.[176]

The present mayor of Allentown was never elected to office on a non-partisan ballot and yet he positively believes that commission government is founded on it, and it cannot run on a partisan basis. The men elected to Allentown's first commission under the non-partisan ballot agreed not to play politics. The legislature changed the ballot, contrary to the will of the people of Allentown, and the people there feel that they cannot operate on a partisan basis. Party ballots are used but the people still contrive to operate on a non-

[175]Interview with writer, July, 1924.

The writer's conversation with this former assemblyman, who is now the secretary of a social and religious organization, greatly surprised him and caused him no little amount of thinking. For, according to this impression, this person is a progressive and not closely identified with a party organization. Nine times out of ten, men of this type are in favor of the non-partisan ballot. This assemblyman supported it when it was used and when it was repealed; his present attitude might be the result of new associations and new interests, or it might be the result of further deliberation on his city's experience with the non-partisan ballot.

Since the above was written the writer has further investigated the connections of this secretary. He learned that the secretary, tho once of independent leanings now "traded with the regular organization." Letter to writer, November, 1926.

[176]Interview with writer.

Senator Schantz also declared that he was opposed to the direct primary, and he said that he was in favor of the election of United States senators by the state legislatures. "If we had that system now we would not have any Brookharts and LaFolletes in the senate."

partisan basis. For example: The 1923 council contained four Democrats and one Republican; altho the Democrats were in the majority, they appointed a Republican as city assessor, and a Republican as city solicitor, and an able engineer without even knowing the party to which he belonged.[177]

Mr. R. J. Wheeler, a Socialist, said that the non-partisan ballot was repealed because of the non-partisan success in Lehigh county. "Senator Schantz introduced the repealer. I was with a small committee at Harrisburg trying to get the governor not to sign the repealer. The governor asked us if it didn't make for discord. 'No, we three are of three different political parties and we work in our Allentown council in complete harmony'." Calvin Arner was elected to council under the non-partisan system because of his record. He would never have been elected under a partisan system. The non-partisan ballot led people to vote for a man regardless of his party. Wheeler's defeat in 1919 was due to the type of ballot used and the partisan nature of the contest. The Socialist party is opposed to this ballot for it makes it harder to keep voters in line. Organizations are always in favor of partisan elections.

The "Labor Herald" put out 15,000 copies during the 1917 campaign. Each one of these newspapers carried an appeal to the voters for support of certain candidates. Wheeler was one of the candidates supported in this campaign. Jack Allen and he put in the comfort station and the sewerage system in Allentown and he made the banks pay interest on their monthly balance. He is in favor of running government like a business. The first non-partisan commission gave the system a fair trial. Mayor Gross and Wheeler wanted to get started right and they explained the non-partisan idea to the others. The success of the first commission government under the Clark Act was due to the non-partisan ballot. This council so strongly emphasized the value of the non-partisan ballot that the people in Allentown still tend to be non-partisan, regardless of the bal-

[177]Interview with writer, July, 1924.

lot used.[178]

Mr. John Allen was elected to the city commission while the non-partisan ballot was used and he thinks that neither he nor Wheeler would have been elected had party ballots been used, because the politicians would have opposed them both more effectively. The politicians did not want the non-partisan ballot because they could not control it; it was the best thing that ever happened for Allentown. Now under the partisan system Harry Trexler and Ed Young were the men guiding the destiny of the city. Some of the commissioners can't call their soul their own. Now it is Republican versus Democrat.[179]

Mr. Thomas J. Roth was a member of the Allentown commission during the non-partisan period and he has been twice re-elected since then. He knows a great deal about water supply and, according to one newspaper man, his usefulness to the city is due primarily to this fact. Mr. Roth does not believe that the form of ballot makes any difference in the type of men elected to office. He is neither for nor against the non-partisan ballot for this reason. "In this community the people look to the man—not the party. Partisanship did not enter into either my 1919 or my 1921 campaign." Mr. Roth believes in appointing men to office because of their ability, and without regard to their politics. He acts on this principle, notwithstanding the type of ballot that he was elected on and he says that the mayor and the other commissioners do too. "I am head of the water department and I employ 40 men on the merit basis." It cost more money to run for office under the non-partisan system, for there were two campaigns to go through; when party ballots are used a man can secure his party's nomination without a fight.[180]

The city editor of the "Chronicle and News" is decidedly opposed to the non-partisan ballot as he saw it work in Allentown. Everyone knew the party affiliation of the candi-

[178]Interview with writer, July, 1924.
[179]Interview with writer, July, 1924.
[180]Interview with writer, July, 1924.

dates and the party organizations supported their men. The elections were non-partisan in name only. "I believe that a stronger type of candidate has run for office since the non-partisan ballot has been abolished. It did no good and was favored by mere radicals and Socialists. This ballot was wrong because it tended to do away with party competition and our government is based on that."[181]

Mr. Percy Ruhe, the editor of the "Allentown Call" and a man singularly well informed concerning the political and other questions affecting his city, is highly in favor of the non-partisan ballot. The first year it was used in Allentown a large number of candidates ran for office. These 49 candidates in the first primary were made up in good part of the members of the old select and common council. Wheeler, a Socialist, was elected. This circumstance left the people rather disgruntled with the non-partisan ballot. However, Wheeler was a good man. He started a vigorous handling of the water department. He reduced labor, shortened hours for workers, and improved machinery. He was of value in the city council. He also saw to it that the city got interest on daily or monthly balances as well as on the sinking fund. Hitherto the city had gotten interest only on sinking fund. Senator Horace Schantz was the one who started the repeal movement. He said that he wanted it repealed because Wheeler, a Socialist, was elected. Ruhe is for it because city government is a business proposition. However, the people in Allentown tend to be non-partisan in spite of the ballot used.[182]

Wilkes Barre

Mr. Roscoe Smith, a lawyer in Wilkes Barre, said, "If you want the non-partisan ballot to be a success, you must do away with the party registration law. If the voters must register their party, they will remain partisan and the ballot will not make the election non-partisan.[183]

[181]Interview with writer.
[182]Interview with writer.
[183]Interview with writer, February, 1924. (Pennsylvania has the closed primary.)

Mr. Louis Kniffen, a party organization man, said that he was opposed to the non-partisan idea anywhere. "My idea may be a selfish one, but I am opposed to the non-partisan idea because with it the party could not keep the foreign vote in line. The non-partisan ballot breaks down party responsibility, it takes real interest out of politics. In theory the non-partisan ballot seems all right for the community, but it certainly is not the thing a party man wants. Party organization depends on the party leaders. The party leader depends upon the number of people that he can sway. The party leader can hold his men in line if a party ballot is used, but this is more difficult if the non-partisan ballot is used." At one point in the conversation Mr. Kniffen said that he was between two fires—he believed in the non-partisan idea, but it is rough on politics.[184]

Mr. John H. Dando was formerly chairman of the Republican city committee and he still is a strong organization man. To him American government is party government. Here they can have one of two things—government by the rabble, or by parties. The national parties are built on the local units, and without the support of the county, and city organization and patronage, the national parties could not exist. If you wish to mobilize an army you would not start at Washington, you would start with a squad and the smaller divisions; the same is true in political parties. You must build up the organization from ward to nation.[185]

Mr. Charles Loveland is a lawyer, a Republican, and a former city commissioner. "The non-partisan ballot tends to eliminate the party idea from the minds of the people. However, the results achieved with it in Wilkes Barre have not been much. The non-partisan ballot made little difference in the outcome of the several elections in which it was used. The main value of the non-partisan ballot has been to educate the people so that they will more carefully con-

[184]Interview with writer, February, 1924.
[185]Interview with writer, February, 1924.

sider the candidate."[186]

Coatesville[187]

When the writer was introduced to Mayor Swing of Coatesville, this city official said, "I am a gang politician, look me over." The non-partisan ballot, according to Mayor Swing, got in the wrong kind of people. The party usually supports responsible persons, but men got elected under the non-partisan ballot who were not capable. When the non-partisan ballot is used there is no one to hold responsible in case some unfit person is elected. Now it is to the interest of the organization to get the best type of man in office. A Democrat or an Independent would have a little better chance of winning under the non-partisan system. "I am a rock-ribbéd Republican, but I'll not vote for a man simply because he is a Republican. The city clerk is for the non-partisan ballot because it is in the blood. His grandfather was a Democrat."[188]

Mr. Walter Greenwood, the city clerk of Coatesville, said that the same men were elected in Coatesville under the non-partisan ballot who were elected before under the partisan ballot. While the non-partisan ballot was used candidates and party workers did not hesitate to say "do not vote for him, because he is a Democrat." The one defect of the non-partisan ballot was that a man could get elected because he was popular and yet he might have been quite worthless, so worthless that no party organization would dare to nominate him; yet Greenwood firmly favored the non-partisan ballot and was sorry to see it repealed. The chamber of commerce and city council in Coatesville adopted a resolution opposing its repeal. The party label is a smoke screen and it often tends to draw voters who would otherwise consider the candidate. One extreme example is that of the colored voter. He votes for anyone as long as he is a Republican.[189]

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[186]Interview with writer, February, 1924.

[187]Coatesville did not become a city until 1915, and used the non-partisan ballot but twice.

[188]Interview with writer, June, 1924.

[189]Interview with writer, June, 1924.

York

In 1915, according to Mayor Hugentugler, the election in York was very nearly along party lines. "The Republican majority in this city was 300. My majority was 392. In 1919 there was a truer non-partisan election than in 1915. Then my majority was 1400 more than the normal Republican majority. In 1923 the organization was against me and the Republicans spent $10,000 and bought the nomination. A number of big people in York prevailed upon me to run as an Independent. On the last day for filing papers I consented. Then there was an executive committee of seven formed. This was made up of three Republicans and four Democrats. The Republicans spent $70,000 in the election. Votes sold for $25 apiece. My group spent $6,000 or $7,000. There was a real non-partisan election in 1923. The non-partisan ballot would not have helped, save for the fact that I would have been nominated in the first place if the non-partisan ballot had been used. Many partisan Democrats could not vote for me in the 1923 primary. Elections are less likely to be dominated by a boss if a non-partisan ballot is used. This ballot did not have a fair trial in Pennsylvania. People were not educated up to it. It was abolished because the machine could not handle it."[190]

A Democrat who has been elected mayor of ———— under both the partisan and non-partisan ballots, is enthusiastically in favor of the non-partisan ballot. He insisted that it made it possible for the man to be elected on the basis of his fitness for office, rather than on the basis of party or gang affiliations. One of his statements was, "In most parts of Pennsylvania it is no more possible for a Democrat to be elected than it is for me to jump to the moon." He does not believe that there is any place for parties in municipal elections. The Republican organization was against the non-partisan ballot, for it cut down the vote in the Republican stronghold. It also caused them the expense of an additional fight. When party ballots are

[190]Interview with writer, August, 1924.

used, organization men have only one fight to make.[191]

Conclusions

Probably the most important idea gleaned from these interviews was the discovery that a certain type of individual favored the non-partisan ballot, and a different, and even more distinct type, opposed it. It was not an impossible adventure to accurately surmise the drift of a given individual's thinking on this ballot.[192] Neither was it difficult to know a person's views on related political subjects after he had once started talking about non-partisanship. Senator Schantz, who is quoted on page 125, differs in degree, but not in kind, from the great majority of the other men who prefer partisan to non-partisan elections. It is because of this that interviews, and for the same reason, questionnaire material, letters, and newspaper articles, ought to be weighed as well as counted. It seems to the writer that it is not enough to merely know that a person is for the non-partisan ballot or opposed to it. Rather, the reasons why he supports or rejects this system of voting should be considered. Of course this is the chief justification for quoting interviews and other expressions of opinion instead of summarizing them. The bare conclusion, the mere yes or no, could be much more simply stated.

One cannot well summarize these opinions without sacrificing some of their individuality and meaning. However, a few brief statements may be made about the two groups: The partisan group firmly believes that the non-partisan ballot made party organization difficult, and that it tended to produce irresponsible leadership. To this group, a strong city organization of national parties, always actively at work, with the ruling of the city as its chief business, is an absolute necessity, not only municipally, but nationally; for they feel that the strength of the national parties lies in the strength of the units in even the smallest communities. The

[191]This official does not want his name used in connection with this interview.

[192]The one marked surprise in this connection is mentioned in a footnote on page 125.

party must be strong in the cities, to keep the foreign vote in control, and to keep the spice perpetually in politics. The non-partisan ballot removes the spice.

The group favoring the non-partisan ballot believe that people will vote for the best man regardless of party when they are not required to vote the party ballot at municipal elections. People do not like to have to state their party affiliations when they go to the polls, and the non-partisan ballot does away with that feature of elections. Better men will run for office under that system—people who have real ideas about governing cities.

9. ARGUMENTS FOR AND AGAINST THE NON-PARTISAN BALLOT ANSWERED BY THOSE WHO HAVE HAD ACTUAL EXPERIENCE WITH IT

In a description of Severus Cassius, Montaigne says of him that he "spoke best extempore, and stood more obliged to fortune than his own diligence; it was an advantage to him to be interrupted in speaking, and his adversaries were afraid to nettle him, lest his anger redouble his eloquence."[193]

The writer had some such idea in mind when he prepared a list of the names of those men who had earlier written to him expressing a decided opinion either favorable or unfavorable about the non-partisan ballot in municipal elections. He analyzed the replies from these men and then formulated six leading arguments against the non-partisan ballot to be used in one questionnaire, and four leading arguments in favor of that type of ballot for another questionnaire.

A group of these questionnaires citing the arguments against the ballot were sent to the ardent protagonists of the non-partisan system; and a group containing the arguments in favor of the ballot were sent to its adversaries. A letter was sent with the questionnaire that explained its purpose, and contained a request that the person receiving it answer the arguments presented as explicitly as possible.

[193]Cited by Brand Whitlock in "Forty Years of It," page 170.

Twenty-seven letters and questionnaires were sent to those who are in favor of the non-partisan ballot. Out of this group 11 answered—nearly 41 percent of those who had been written to. Twenty-six letters and questionnaires of the opposite group were sent to those who are against the ballot. Out of this group, seven answered, about 26 percent of those who had been written to.[194]

The replies in this group of questionnaires were in the main disappointing, because they presented so little new material. For the most part those who opposed the non-partisan ballot were against all the arguments that the writer listed in its favor; the converse was also true, for those who were in favor of the ballot were not willing to actually accept any of the arguments that were made against it. There were exceptions to this rule, however, on both sides, altho more on the side of those who favored the non-partisan ballot. They were definitely for the ballot, but ready to admit the strength of one or more of the arguments that had been used against it.[195]

In general the arguments advanced by those who opposed the non-partisan ballot are less effectively put, and less sound in substance and logic than those advanced by the other group, if they are to be estimated merely by the material presented in the questionnaires. The partisan group were usually less expansive than the champions of the ballot and their point of view seemed rather more violent and prejudiced than did that of their opponents. Judging merely by the spelling, and general appearance of the question-

[194]One letter in this latter group was returned to the writer without having been delivered to the person addressed. The fact that only seven out of 26 answered in this group is another instance in which those who oppose the non-partisan ballot were less willing to write their views than the other group were. It is also interesting to note that this group made up exclusively of individuals who had already written to the writer about the non-partisan ballot replied more freely than any other group addressed, 34 percent of the entire group responding.

[195]An instance of this attitude may be cited here. In answer to the argument that the non-partisan ballot does not make elections non-partisan, one person said: "This is true in part only. The politician does support the candidate of their party, but it does not apply to the great majority of other voters."

naires, the group favoring the non-partisan ballot are apt to be better educated and better able to express their ideas in writing than are the opposing group. If one were to evaluate the worth of the ballot merely at the face value of these questionnaires and the apparent intelligence and ability of the individuals on either side, the balance of favor would inevitably go to the advocates of the non-partisan ballot.

The following questionnaire was sent to the men who had already written an adverse opinion of the non-partisan ballot:

Arguments in Favor of the Non-Partisan Ballot

1. The non-partisan ballot makes the voter think of the man's ability and not of the political party. Therefore more capable men are chosen. These candidates are free to serve the whole people, for they owe allegiance to no party or organization.
(How do you meet this point?)

2. When the party ballot is used voters will invariably vote for the candidate regardless of his merit. This fact often permits party organizations to support and bring about the election of unworthy candidates.
(Is this a fact? Reasons for your answer.)

3. Many business men and other capable citizens who are not in politics will successfully run for city council when the non-partisan ballot is used, whereas men of this same type will not try to get elected to public office when party ballots are used.
(What is your most effective answer to this argument?)

4. The non-partisan ballot enables the independent voters in the community to center their strength upon the non-organization candidates, whereas their influence would be divided and weakened if party ballots were used.

5. City government is merely a business problem. It isn't a Democratic thing or a Republican thing at all. The government of a city is just like the management of any big business.
(Where is this idea at fault or do you agree?)

6. The non-partisan ballot was not given a fair trial in cities of the third class in Pennsylvania. It was not used long enough for the people to clearly understand its value. The party organization had it abolished because it made it difficult for them to prevent the election of independent candidates.
(Was this actually the case? What is your opinion?)

In answer to the first argument that the writer cited in favor of the non-partisan ballot, those who answered all held

that more capable men were not chosen. Some were particularly vivid in their ways of putting their convictions. One said that more capable men are obtained

" . . . if you can get men to think. Only five percent of the people think; another five percent are bolshevists; and these two groups do the thinking for the remaining 90 percent."

Another said that the non-partisan ballot merely

" . . . produces demagogues, radicals who cater to popular whims, without platforms, no plan of action."

One said that the thesis of the first argument is

" . . . theoretically correct, but doesn't work out in practice. Our form of national and state government makes political parties imperative, and this partisanship cannot be made effective without exercise of power in local elections. Non-partisan ballots do not by any manner of means or by any stretch of the imagination make non-partisan elections. Politicians of the dominant party see to it that their adherents are favored whether the ballot carries party designations or not. And don't forget that professional politicians are not the only partisans. The average voter is as strongly partisan as his ward leader."

In answer to the second argument on this questionnaire, this entire group believed that people did not automatically vote the party ticket regardless of the candidate listed and they also denied that parties were as a rule able to elect unworthy candidates, their argument being that the parties seldom choose unworthy candidates. Their general stand was well expressed by the statement that

"Formerly it was a fact; but slowly the people are asserting themselves and are demanding to know 'who's who'."

In answer to the third argument, five held that the type of ballot used made no difference in the matter of business men's running. Two brought in some additional ideas on the matter. One said that his observation was

" . . . that most business men shy at an official position since it does not make friends in all particulars. Hence a loss of patronage."

Another said:

"I cannot conceive of any business man or any other eminently re-

spectable person running for office without assurance of organization support. And God help the people when it will be possible for any renegade with a bootlegger's profits in his pockets to sneak into office without an identification card. In bigger cities this is quite possible, where partisan supervision would be lifted."

Two did not answer the fourth argument; the other answers are fairly well included in the following statement from one of the questionnaires:

"So-called 'independent voters' are really only malcontents and disappointed office seekers. A small proportion are honestly open-minded and honest, but their support comes heavily from the malcontent type, and there is no real grounds for the presumption that candidates selected by such people are of better quality than those of party selection.."

With two exceptions, all the individuals in this group agreed that city government is a business problem. The two who differed considered city government essentially a political rather than a business proposition. One person said:

"Granting that this is true then it applies with equal merit to state and national government. Political partisanship is imperative under our form of national government, and for the best interests of the country it must be considered better than a mere cloak to be cast aside at will. Municipal government is no more a business per se than the state or national government. In all divisions government should be businesslike."

In answer to the last argument, two questionnaires were left blank; one man felt that the ballot had perhaps not been given a fair trial; one did not know it had been discontinued; another thought that it had been given ample trial and that people were glad to get rid of it; the other two answers were as follows:

". Reformers and Independents have seldom been able to 'come back' for the reason that they are generally inexperienced 'fadists,' one track men and not liberal or progressive in dealing with the public made up of all classes."

"The partisan or the non-partisan ballot is not what should concern the citizens of Pennsylvania, but a way and means to separate the ballot from money and political patronage. These are the two things that are causing the decay and decline of our system of government —national, state and municipal. Get to the bottom of these two evils and your ballot will take care of itself, and some near day, the

greatest and best government ever devised on God's footstool will be but a thing of the past."

The following questionnaire was sent to those who favor the use of the non-partisan ballot in municipal elections:

Arguments in Favor of the Non-Partisan Ballot

1. You can hold no one responsible for the weak candidates who are elected to city council when the non-partisan ballot is used. The non-partisan official is independent and irresponsible, and unwilling to consider the wishes of party leaders who know what should be done for the city. Officials are always changing but parties remain forever; therefore, the voters can most safely rely upon a well known party.

(Is this a fact? Reasons for your answer.)

2.The non-partisan ballot does not make the election non-partisan. When it is used, municipal campaigns are as partisan as ever. It merely destroys party responsibility.

(What is your most effective answer to his argument?)

3. The voter is not interested and will not come out to vote in a non-partisan election. It takes party ballots and a party contest to make the voter go to the polls. The voter is more interested in party ideas than he is in personalities.

(Is this actually the case? What is your opinion?)

4. Our government since the beginning has been run by parties, not personalities or blocs. A national party can only be a success when it is supported by parties of the same kind in the smaller divisions, such as the state, county, and city. Anything that has a tendency to destroy or weaken the understructure of parties, weakens parties in the national field. The non-partisan ballot was destructive; it destroyed all party government in cities, and, therefore would have destroyed national parties, too.

(Where is this idea at fault, or do you agree?)

The questionnaires in this group are an especially interesting and quotable group. They are answered with care and intelligence, and make a creditable symposium on the non-partisan ballot as a municipal institution.

There seems to be a very distinct capacity among those answering this group of arguments for seeing two sides of a question, and for thoughtfully weighing the values and evidence. For that reason the answers are not always cut and dried and final, as they tend to be in the other group of answers.

The answer to the first argument was unanimous in its

stand that in a non-partisan election, the candidate was quite as responsible to the people as a whole as any party candidate could ever be to just his party. The people too were more than ever responsible for the quality of man they put in office under the non-partisan system. Some of the answers are quoted in detail as follows:

"First—you say you can hold no one responsible for weak candidates under the non-partisan ballot. The people themselves are responsible and they should be held responsible, and no party nor faction.

"Second—you state the non-partisan official is independent; he should be independent and use discretion and judgment in all his deliberation not catering to parties, but doing what is best for his community."

"Best men in party primaries seldom receive nominations—because those who wish to grind personal axes in governmental affairs get to dominate the primary—and where large party majority obtains, a mediocre or positively bad candidate on party ticket may easily defeat a far better candidate who is on minority party ticket. This because of the far greater ease of securing renomination on party ticket."

"The goal of those who are sincerely working for the success of democracy is to develop an interested, educated and responsible electorate. If the electorate errs in the selection of a candidate, they will find out by experience how to avoid such errors. If they can pass the goat of responsibility to party leaders, they do not gain by the experience of a poor choice, and by realizing their own responsibility."

"The taxpaying property owners are responsible if weak men are elected to office. Under partisan nominations they must vote for men selected by party bosses. A city official should not be a mere tool and vote for what the party leaders demand. An official should obtain the sentiment of taxpayers regardless of politics and vote for the best interests of his city."

"There can be an honest difference of opinion. I do not believe that weak candidates are named at non-partisan elections. This may be the opinion of rabid party persons who place loyalty to party above good of the public. Non-partisan officials may be more independent of party, but they are more 'responsible' to all. They are not unwilling to consider reasonable wishes of party leaders and be good party men in so doing. Voters can rely to a large extent on party and on conscientious party leaders, but not always on the individual leader who considers party only. I believe in party and in the best ethics of party."

"This (the argument) is not a fact. In the first place there is not likely to be a weak candidate, and the candidate should be responsible to the people, and not to the bosses. The voters know the needs of the cities better than the political leaders (so called). This loss of control of candidates has been expressed to me by political bosses as

their objection to the non-partisan ballot."

"Who ever heard of a party holding responsible an officeholder for his 'weakness'? I have seen many candidates who took office 'strong', made 'weak' by party demands. We all know of strong men taking office and coming out with a personal flatness, and public disgust. They were 'party men,' like Brumbaugh, for instance. So I answer, 'Party responsibility in the form that it exists is usually against the public interests. Party responsibility for the punishment of weak candidates is a myth! . . . The Pennsylvania organization is 'well-known' by the average citizen from coast to coast, but no one would be so stupid as to contend that this fame was due to its 'holding responsible' its candidates to office.

"Furthermore, it is often generally true, and I know it was here for some time, that the party leaders insisted on supporting at the primaries the weak candidates, whom they had originally influenced to 'run' so that the matured 'officeholder' would not be subject to party censure, at least, being stupidly a follower of orders from headquarters. With this plan of selected weak candidates the city administration drifts to the party headquarters. I have known of the annual budget meetings being held in the party headquarters. The Fathers never dreamed of such democracy, even though arrogated by the 'superior'."[196]

In answer to the second group there is unanimity of opinion, with one exception. This man absolutely agrees with the assertion made there. The others agree that partisanship is not totally abolished, but they think it is on the road toward abolishment under the non-partisan system of elections. Some of the answers follow:

"This is true only in part. The politician does support the candidate of their party, but it does not apply to the great majority of the other voters."

"To a certain extent non-partisan ballots do not make complete non-partisan campaigns, but it gives opportunity to choose a better man from another party in preference to an irresponsible, unqualified party man. Party responsibility should be all the keener, and if the best qualified men of the party are nominated, the dominant party can retain power in a good cause."

"This was shown to be untrue by the election results in the few years in which it was tried. A successful candidate elected on a non-partisan ballot is freer from control of party leaders, or organizations, in making his appointments. The intelligent electorate is less and

[196]The writer of this answer is a Ph.D. in political science, and was formerly a teacher of Municipal Government in a western university. He is now a business man in a city of the third class that used the non-partisan ballot from 1913 to 1919, and his father was a member of the city council. He is the only one in either of these two groups who was not elected to office while the non-partisan ballot was used.

less partisan in the way it votes, even under the present party plan. An honest candidate is much more willing to be responsible to the electorate than to the gang or machine which controls parties in a municipality."

"My only experience is based on our local elections, and as we are so largely Republican it frequently gave us a chance to select men who ordinarily would not have been candidates. This resulted in securing as a member of council a man who gave splendid service, but could not have been elected as a candidate in his own party, the Democratic."

"In small communities, like ours (Corry), party politics in city affairs amount to nothing. This city, which is strongly Republican, at our last city election elected a Democratic mayor by an overwhelming majority, and the Republican candidate was one of our most popular men. All candidates take out nomination papers on all party tickets, which proves that they are afraid to seek nomination and election on their own party. There should be no party responsibility, it should be community responsibility."

"I believe a man chosen on a non-partisan ballot is more independent in matters for the benefit of all the taxpayers. Competent city employees are better protected. Under a party victory it is quite often the case that a competent employee is forced out to provide jobs for incompetent poll-workers. Party politics in a city of 120,000 is not as drastic as in the large, machine-controlled cities."

"As long as people are human, some voters will always support a man for office solely because he is of their own political faith, no matter how superior in every way his opponent may be. Yet the non-partisan ballot in cities where all the candidates are well known to all, either personally or by reputation, comes within a very small percent of being purely non-partisan. Party responsibility, or responsibility to party instead of to the people, is exactly what ought to be lessened or destroyed."

"I believe this is true in a sense. If a group gathering around a man, or possibly a group of men is a party, then parties are not destroyed. But they become parties founded on an issue or a personality, rather than jobs alone. Admitting that there is any such thing as party responsibility, then it would be destroyed. I would like to get a definition of party responsibility, and about ten examples of it."

The third argument was met with a fairly solid front. The men who answered these questionnaires were convinced that there was certainly not less interest in elections under the non-partisan system than under the partisan system; and in some cases they felt that there was more under the former system than the present one. Some of the answers follow:

"Untrue in cities of the third class, as a matter affecting the welfare of city and citizens brings out the vote."

"In my opinion, more voters will turn out when they know they

have a larger choice to select from and are not compelled to ask for a party ballot at the primaries. Many voters refuse to vote at primaries because they believe in a secret ballot."

"Considerable truth in this, but our own experience does not show that such is the case here, which is all I have on which to form my favorable opinion of non-partisan elections—that is, in municipal affairs."

"It is true that to a certain extent many voters are less interested than in party elections. On the other hand, many who are disgusted with politics are of the best class of voters, and are of the sort whom we need in public affairs, and they take a greater interest. In the event not much less interest can be taken by the voters than by the voters of today, with party elections only existing."

The fourth argument elicited a particularly keen response. All that answered believed in the necessity for party government of some sort or other, but their definitions of party varied somewhat. They all felt, however, that national policies had nothing to do with municipal policies, and that the life of national parties was not dependent on the amount of political activity municipalities engaged in upon the home field.

Some of the statements made in meeting argument four were as follows:

"This is the say of the politician again. The non-partisan election in cities in no way weakens the parties either national or state."

"As to national politics, this is entirely a different matter. This is a subject of policy as to tariff and international relations and where party opinions are entirely different."

"Party politics nationally are very much different than in local government. I believe in them for state and nation. I do not believe that non-partisan city government should have any disastrous effect on state or national politics. I am a Republican, and if I were serving as a city councilman—on non-partisan election—I would be a Republican just the same when it came to state or national matters. My strong claim is that those who are elected to municipal office should not be under any obligations to any party, and they are to serve the the people, not the party."

"All believe in party rather than bloc control as fixing responsibility for legislation. This is not a question here, as the question is not bloc at all, but the whole people or parties make nominations for office. Municipal problems have no relation to party, and the non-partisan ballot is simply a family (city) trying to select the best men who can be induced to stand for office, to take care of their local affairs. Parties have no place, or should have no place in local affairs of cities, as invariably men satisfactory to local party machines

secure nominations, and generally the dominant party candidates win. Non-partisan elections in cities have no connection with or effect whatever upon county, state, or national contests."

"As I stated above, I believe we should maintain and encourage national political parties. Good idea to have one party watch and find fault with the other in state and national affairs, but I believe the city management should be non-partisan. A city is a big corporation, and every property owner should vote for candidates to control the city regardless of politics. The non-partisan government in Erie was a success."

"At the present our country, from a national standpoint, is distinctly being run by blocs. We have free-trade Republicans, high-tariff-Democrats, and Heaven knows what else. The president, even, can't distinguish the party lines, so he invites the whole crowd to breakfast. If our situation was so much party as the framer of these statements thought, we could easily plan a substitute for congress in the form of a number of push buttons from the two party headquarters, and register their choices by signal lights at the capitol—stop, go-ahead, and left turn.

"It is true that the national parties are weakened unless they have their followers in the local fields. It may be true that the non-partisan ballot weakens political parties. It probably does. Is there any proof for the assertion that the weakening of the political parties would cause suffering in this country?"

Conclusions

In general one might say that those who oppose the non-partisan ballot believe that the average voter is naturally and inevitably partisan, often as "partisan as his ward leader," and a mere mechanical device like a ballot will not change this attitude of mind. Furthermore, party organizations can be depended upon to produce capable candidacies; the Republican and Democratic party leaders know that their choices will fail at the polls if they do not meet a high standard of excellence. Republicans can always vote the Democratic ticket when they are dissatisfied with the selections of their own party, and vice versa. A party endorsement is a credential that publicly proclaims a person's standing in the eyes of those who understand the needs of the city. Without this identifying insignia the voters have no protection against irresponsible individuals who seek office for their personal glory and profit.

The men who think that the non-partisan ballot is the

best ballot for municipal primaries and elections say that there is a loyalty greater than that which belongs to the Republican or Democratic party—loyalty to one's city; one should hold himself responsible to his community, not to his political party. To justify its existence the non-partisan ballot does not need to eliminate every trace of partisanship. Party politics may be much in evidence in a campaign in which the non-partisan ballot is used. Nevertheless it will invariably help to free the voter's mind from party prejudice and past party associations, and make it easier for him to vote for a minority party candidate or an independent, than would otherwise have been the case. The idea that ability and the city, rather than "Republicanism" and the party, are entitled to first consideration, is the logic of the non-partisan ballot. In the second place, the voter might more wisely do his own electing than abdicate in favor of some political party. Party leaders are likely to have their own axes to grind, and they will sacrifice the interest of all for some particular interest. Parties are rarely held responsible for what they do or fail to do. Voters respond to the war cries and the grand old party names; they so intently fix their attention upon the symbol that such a technical thing as the record or personal qualification of a candidate may easily escape them. To state this idea differently one might say that there is a dual gain when the non-partisan ballot is used. It causes the voter to be more alert, and to select the best man for the place; secondly, this man is freer to serve the city than he would otherwise be; he can more easily ignore party demands. The great majority of those who favor this ballot are ardent Republicans and Democrats in the national or state field. To them local politics is different and it should be discussed on its own merits. This separation will not weaken the national party organizations, or if it does, it will not be a serious enough weakening "to cause suffering in the country."

In considering the views of the two groups the writer's conclusion is that the basic difference between them may be reduced to two propositions. The former group is willing

to rely upon the party organization and it does not believe that the voter is competent to act for himself. The latter group believes that the reverse of this is true. Party organizations are not to be trusted and the only hope of a city's achieving its freedom lies in the voter himself. He must exercise his prerogative of choosing men for office—if he cannot safeguard his own interest there is no one that will do it for him.

III

CANDIDATES COMPARED

In attempting to evaluate the non-partisan ballot one is inevitably concerned with the type of candidates chosen in elections in which it is used. The essence of the problem of evaluation involves the comparison of candidates chosen under one system with those chosen under any other system. If the officials selected in a non-partisan election are no more capable and no more interested in the common good than those who are elected in a partisan contest, it will be difficult, viewing the non-partisan ballot in a realistic fashion, to feel that it is superior to the party ballot.

This present chapter is written because of this idea, and of an associated one: that is, that a great majority of those interviewed who favor the non-partisan ballot told the writer that it helped bring about the selection of a better sort of men than were chosen under a partisan system.[1]

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[1]The following letters are very much in point here. The first is a selection from a letter from a public official in Allentown in 1924; the second is part of a letter from a public official in Pottsville who had held office under both systems. The third is from a man who has served three terms as city controller, and under both systems.

(First letter)

"I believe that the legislature made a great mistake when they changed from the non-partisan ballot to the partisan ballot, for I think the very foundation of the commission form of government rested on this feature. The commission form certainly was an improvement over the old bi-cameral system, but when the non-partisan feature was removed I believe that the commission form of government received its death knell. If political parties or bosses were against direct city government, I can see no reason why in a city like ours, the taxpayers should be called upon to pay the commissioners and the mayor $15,500 in salaries.

"At the first election of our commissioners under the non-partisan system, men of the following type were chosen:

A lawyer who is now president of our bar association.
Large manufacturer.
A civil engineer with large business interests.
An educator.

"Contrast this selection with men elected on the partisan ballot:

A foreman in a shoe shop.
Painter.

They asserted that the non-partisan candidates were, on the whole, men of greater ability, integrity, and business acumen than were the partisan groups. They were often prepared to name specific individuals in support of their statements. These individuals had been of undoubted value to their cities during the non-partisan period, and yet, because they were members of some minority party, or independents, or a bit too progressive for the old guard of their own party, they could never have been chosen under a partisan system. Those who opposed the non-partisan system were likely to say that it made no difference in the calibre of men elected, and merely added to the expense and confusion of the election. Or they were of the opinion that this ballot permitted dangerous and irresponsible men to secure office—men who would be independent of all control.

The writer was interested in measuring, as accurately as he could, the truth of these assertions. In examining the files of the different newspapers he had gathered some data regarding the men chosen to office during the period investigated; however, this material in even the most favorable instances, was fragmentary, and would not furnish a basis for making an adequate comparison; neither was it possible to secure this information from any public records.

(Footnote continued)

Woodworker, and an insurance agent."

(Second letter)

"It has been proven in Pottsville in the past that when we had non-partisan elections that men of big business affairs and education were aspirants to office, they sacrificing time and money for the city without any thought of compensation for services rendered. Compare these former executives with present candidates and incumbents and such comparison is terrible. It has been proven that inefficiency and dominated interest and inexperience is a fearful and costly combination for taxpayers everywhere."

(Third letter)

"I know that under the non-partisan system we had better, more intelligent, more efficient members of city council than the city had at any previous time or since we went back to the old partisan system. I know it was possible to get men to run for these different offices who had the needs of the city at heart, but would not care to be classed as politicians by running on a partisan platform."

There was only one method available, and that theoretically, was to interview these officials, or someone who knew them, or had known them, and ask the specific questions that one wanted answered. Practically, this method was impossible to follow because of the labor and expense that it involved; and, moreover, a number of these 450 officials are no longer alive. The writer, therefore, prepared a questionnaire containing twelve questions, as to education, ability, honesty, personality, occupation and business experience, former political activities, party, sources of support, and wealth.[2] The

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[2]"The following information is wanted regarding————————, who was a member of your city council. Please answer each question definitely and concretely. If you are in doubt about an answer say so. This information will be treated in an objective and scientific manner and your name will not be used in connection with it. Feel free to write what you know. Use extra paper in answering questions if necessary.

1. Approximate age now (1925)?
2. Extent of educational training—
   - Grammar school?
   - High school?
   - College or University?
3. Business ability—
   - Great?
   - Medium?
   - Very little?
   - Incapable of holding public office?
4. Character—
   - Honest?
   - Doubtful honesty?
   - Dishonest?
5. Personality—
   - Favorable and attracts votes?
   - Colorless and no immediate appeal?
6. Occupation? Be specific.
7. Business experience?
8. What other public or party office has this candidate held?
9. Was this candidate a member of the old select and common council?
10. Was this candidate a member of
    - The Republican party organization?
    - The Democratic party organization?
    - The Socialist party organization?
    - An Independent?
    - An anti-organization man?
11. Did this candidate receive important support at the election from:
    - Lodges?
    - Labor Unions?

next step was to get the names of the officials that were being surveyed. After the lists of names had been obtained from each city, each one of the names was inserted at the head of a questionnaire. A package of these questionnaires, including all the successful candidates for the office of city councilman, city controller, and mayor for 1913 to 1923 was then made up for each city, and sent out to each city respectively, to some politically informed citizen, for him to fill out.

This information was difficult to obtain, and it is not of uniform value. However, it has been secured for all the twenty-eight cities, and it represents, unverifiable though some of it is, the only attempt that has been made to speak in terms of actual men, and not merely the type of men, elected to public office in the cities of the third class in Pennsylvania.

The writer is fully conscious of the fact that one man's opinion of another man's honesty, or personality, or ability may be partly the result of the individual attitude of the person filling out the questionnaire—there is no litmus paper that will infallibly tell the political investigator what official is honest, or capable, or blessed with a favorable personality. Inasmuch as these questionnaires were filled out by some individual personally acquainted with the official asked about, it is quite possible that some personal injury or favor further colored the opinion expressed. In a certain few instances, court proceedings were cited in support of an opinion concerning the honesty of a candidate, rumors were mentioned, and in one instance the attitude of the local grocer in refusing credit was evinced. Often the record of achievement of an official or the occupation of a candidate were of interest and value in light of the opinion expressed

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(Footnote continued)

The Church?
The Press?

12. Approximate wealth of candidate—
Less than $500?
Between $500 and $3000?
Between $3000 and $10,000?
More than $10,000?

about the ability. In a great majority of those cases in which the writer was able to verify the information given, he considered the opinion expressed about even such an intangible thing as honesty or ability of some descriptive value.[3]

The information regarding education, occupation, and business experience, party affiliation, and approximate wealth, admits of more exact description and seems to the writer to be the more important part of the data presented on the type of candidate chosen.[4] The material given concerning the support that each candidate received is not wholly conclusive. To adequately answer this question one would require rather detailed information of an event, in certain instances, ten years past. However, some candidates are so closely identified with their supporters that the problem, to a local observer, of associating the two, is not difficult. This is particularly true in those instances in which a candidate received a large measure of his support from some particular group or groups: such as the labor unions, the churches, the lodges (or some certain lodge), or some body of men such as the volunteer fire department in Reading, or the organization Republicans or Democrats, or the press. Contrasted with these candidates were those that were carried into office because they won support generally and from all groups in the community and all sections of the city. Of course there were many candidates that fell in neither of these classes exclusively, and the problem of describing their supporters was exceedingly difficult. Another uncertainty associated with this problem, and espe-

[3]By means of personal interviews and a second set of questionnaires for the same cities, the writer has verified some of the questionnaires —the amount of labor that would have been required to have verified all of them made the matter prohibitive.

[4]Data on political offices previously held by the candidates, questions 8 and 9, would seemingly fall within this group, but the manner in which these two questions were answered leads the writer to place less confidence in this material than it seemingly might warrant. Because the age given was sometimes an approximation of the age—it was given as falling between two different years in instances of this sort—the writer has not included this information on age within the class of data that seems most reliable.

cially with this phase of it, is the result of the fact that descriptive words, such as "lodge", "church", and "press", have no standardized significance. To say that a candidate was supported by the press may mean that he was endorsed by one or more newspapers, or that news comments and editorials were written about him, or that a number of newspapers waged a campaign for him. The local situation at election time would in many cases determine the attitude of the press, and, therefore, the meaning of the term "support by the press" was likely to vary, not only from city to city and newspaper to newspaper, but from election to election in the same newspaper. In a somewhat similar manner the meaning of the other terms changed. Notwithstanding these shortcomings a summary of the writer's material regarding support received by candidates will be presented in this chapter along with other summaries.

In the following tabulated questionnaire data[5] about the 450 municipal officers elected between 1913 and 1923 the writer has used these abbreviations:

N.P=Men elected under non-partisan system
B.=Men elected under both systems
P.=Men elected under partisan system

1. Age[6]

Percentage of those holding office between the ages of:

20-30	31-40	41-50
N.P.— 2 %	N.P.—18.2%	N.P.—27 %
B.— 2.9%	B.—19.4%	B.—43.6%
P.— 4.5%	P.—18 %	P.—32.2%

[5]There were 192 officials in this group elected under the non-partisan system, 155 officials elected under the partisan system, and 103 officials that were elected to office under both the non-partisan and partisan systems.

[6]Those about whom this information was not given. N.P.—23.4%
B. — 7.7%
P. —12.2%

51-60	61-70
N.P.—23.4%	N.P.—5.7%
B.—21.3%	B.—4.8%
P.—25.1%	P.—6.4%

2. Education.[7]

Percentage having:

College Education	Only High-School Education	Only Grammar School Education
N.P.—19%	N.P.—34%	N.P.—44%
B.—18%	B.—33%	B.—47%
P.—15%	P.—29%	P.—54%

3. Ability.[8]

Percentage of those having:

Great Ability	Medium Ability	Very Little Ability	Incapable of holding office
N.P.—34%	N.P.—56%	N.P.—10%	N.P.— 0%
B.—34%	B.—56%	B.— 9%	B.— .9%
P.—23%	P.—62%	P.—14%	P.— 0%

4. Character.[9]

Percentage reputed as:

Honest	Being of Doubtful Honesty	Being Dishonest
N.P—91%	N.P.— 8%	N.P.— .5%
B.—82%	B.—18%	B.— 0%
P.—83%	P.—16%	B.— 1%

[7]Those about whom this information was not given. N.P.—3%
B.—2%
P.—2%

[8]Those about whom this information was not given P.—6%

[9]Those about whom this information was not given N.P.—.5%

5. Personality.

Percentage reported as: Having definitely favorable personalities.	Having colorless Personalities.	Doubtful
N.P.—79%	N.P.—19%	N.P.— 2%
B.—82%	B.—18%	B.— 0%
P.—74%	P.—25%	P.— 1%

6. Occupations.

Class 1. (Professional)

	N.P.	B.	P.
Civil Engineer	4	1	0
Lawyer	12	5	5
Accountant	7	1	5
Druggist	1	3	3
Dentist	2	2	2
Physician	4	3	5
Editor	5	1	2
Educator	1	1	0
Preacher	1	0	0
Total	37	17	22

Class 2a. (Merchants, Dealers, Superintendents, Manufacturers, Bankers, Real Estate, Foremen, Contractors)

	N.P.	B.	P.
Manufacturer	9	4	8
Contractor	14	11	4
Real Estate	5	4	2
Banker	4	1	0
Foreman	5	2	3
Oil Producer	3	0	0
Coal Operator	2	0	0
Superintendent	4	1	3
Merchant	23	9	10

Grocer	4	1	4
Auto Dealer	1	3	2
Monument Works	1	2	0
Storage and Warehouse	1	0	0
Florist	1	0	0
Ice and Coal	1	0	0
Manager	5	3	3
Farmer	1	0	0
Butcher	1	0	0
Coal Broker	0	0	1
Wheat Broker	0	0	1
Total	85	41	41

Class 2b. (Clerks, Salesmen, Bookkeepers)

	N.P.	B.	P.
Ex-Saloon keeper	2	0	0
Insurance	3	1	8
Undertaker	0	4	3
Clerk	11	4	7
Bookkeeper	1	1	3
Storekeeper	3	2	6
Salesman	2	0	8
Reporter	2	2	0
Hotel Keeper	0	1	0
Truck Driving Business	1	0	0
Bath House Proprietor	1	0	0
Proprietor News Stand	0	0	1
Typewriter Exchange	0	0	1
Ex-Soldier	0	0	1
Collector of Bills	0	0	1
Physical Director	0	0	1
Total	26	15	40

Class 3. (Artisans and Factory Workers)

	N.P	B.	P.
Machinist	1	1	2
Plumber	1	0	7

Mechanic	1	0	0
Printer	2	2	2
Bricklayer	2	0	0
Barber	3	0	0
Painter	2	1	0
Carpenter	2	0	4
Skilled Laborer	3	0	3
Tailor	1	1	1
Well Driller	0	1	0
Sign Painter	0	1	0
Carpet Cleaner	0	1	0
Watchmaker	0	1	0
Electrician	0	0	2
Heating Engineer	0	0	1
Total	18	9	22

Class 4. (Railroad Employees)

	N.P	B.	P
R. R. employees	4	2	7

Class 5. (Laborers, Janitors)

	N.P	B.	P
Supt. Bank Building	0	0	1
Laborer	1	1	5
Total	1	1	6

Class 6. (Retired men, "Gentlemen")

	N.P	B.	P
Gentlemen	2	2	2
Retired	5	0	1
Total	7	2	3

Class 7. (City Officials)

	N.P.	B.	P.
City official	7	5	6

Politics	0	1	0
Whiskey Gauger	0	0	1
Letter Carrier	0	0	2
Police	0	1	1
Total	7	7	10

Class 8. (?)

	N.P.	B.	P.
West Penn. Power Co.	1	0	0
None	1	0	3
?	5	6	0
Total	7	6	3

8.

Percentage who had held public office other than the councilmanic office:[10]

Those who had held other office.		Those who had not held other office:	
N.P.	31%	N.P.	61%
B.	26%	B.	69%
P.	17%	P.	80%

9.

Percentage of those who had formerly been members of the select and common council:[11]

Those who had been members:		Those who had not been members:	
N.P.	34%	N. P.	57%
B.	35%	B.	57%
P.	17%	P.	77%

[10]Those about whom this information was not given: N.P.—8%
B. —5%
P. —3%

[11]Those about whom this informatoin was not given: N.P.—9%
B. —8%
P. —6%

10. Party.[12]

Republican	Democratic	Socialist	Independent
N.P.—59%	N.P.—32%	N.P.— 3%	N.P.— 6%
B.—66%	B.—24%	B.— 2%	B.— 7%
P.—65%	P.—23%	P.— 6%	P.— 9%

11. Support.[13]

	N.P.	B.	P.
Supported by all important groups	35	25	28
Lodges, church and press	14	7	4
Labor unions and labor press	3	2	10
Lodges and labor unions	10	5	13
Labor unions	16	5	7
Labor unions and church	2	4	2
Labor unions and church and press	3	0	1
Lodges, labor unions church	2	1	3
Lodges, labor unions, press	4	2	3
Lodges, press	9	8	8
Lodges, church	14	5	13
Church and press	11	2	4
Press	13	6	6
Lodges and firemen	2	1	2
Lodges, firemen, R. R. men	2	0	0
Lodges, church, firemen	1	0	0
Independent voters	1	0	0
None	4	0	0
Lodges	18	10	16
Church	8	3	1
Firemen	0	0	1
Democrats	1	0	1
Democratic Socialists	0	0	1
Wet	0	0	1
Gang	0	0	1

[12]Those about whom this information was not given: B. 9%;P. 2%

[13]Those about whom this information was not given: N.P.—19%
B.—15%
P.—24%

12. Wealth.[14]

$10,000 or more	$3,000 to $10,000	$500 to $3,000	Less than $500
N.P.—56%	N.P.—32%	N.P.—11%	N.P.— 1%
B.—52%	B.—29%	B.—15%	B.— 2%
P.—37%	P.—34%	P.—22%	P.— 5%

Conclusion

A consideration of the summaries of the questionnaire answers is likely to be disappointing to anyone who wishes to prove beyond a doubt that one system is far better than the other in the matter of types of men elected to offices under either system. This final evidence fails to indicate that there was an abrupt change in the type of men chosen in the two periods. It is quite evident that all the college graduates were not chosen in one period and the grammar school candidates in the other. Neither can it be said that the honest and capable officials were entirely the product of one system of voting. The data does not resolve itself into black and white—much of it is grey—and the problem of interpretation at this phase of the study—as at many other phases—involves the determination not of a color, but of a shade. The question of degree is of central importance. In this concrete case one of the problems, for example, was to find out the percentage of candidates elected in the non-partisan period with a college education, with a high school education and with a grammar school education. These same percentages were then ascertained for those candidates that were elected in the partisan period and also for those that had been elected in both the non-partisan and partisan periods. A comparison of these percentages will necessarily show whether there was a more favorable tendency for college or high school graduates to be chosen under one or the other system.

[14]Those about whom this information was not given: N.P. 1%
B. 2%
P. 2%

Education.

The non-partisan group furnished slightly higher percentages of men with a college education and with a high school education than did the partisan group, and the most striking fact about this data is that fifty-four per cent of the partisan group had only a grammar school education as compared with forty-four per cent in the non-partisan group.

Ability.

The non-partisan group have an excess of eleven per cent over the partisan group among men of great ability. There is not so great a difference in the group having medium ability, and there are four per cent more with very little ability in the partisan group than in that composed of non-partisan officials. Probably the most striking fact about this data on ability is the discovery that the only one of the groups that furnished any officials that were designated as incapable of holding public office was that one whose members had been in both periods and under both types of ballot.[15]

Character.

Character like ability and personality cannot be readily measured. According to the opinions expressed regarding character there were eight per cent more of the partisan group of doubtful honesty than there were in the non-partisan group. There was a higher percentage of men of doubtful honesty elected under both types of ballot than there were elected exclusively under one or the other type

[15]This material on ability, as the writer has already pointed out, is of questionable value. Here the possibility of bias and personal prejudice is very great. The standard used in this connection was subjective and changing. It may be noted that the filling out of the questionnaires required that some observer consider each official individually and then set down his opinion of each one's ability, etc. A survey of these composite opinions unmistakably shows that candidates of great ability were elected under each system, and that neither type of ballot could exclusively claim those few candidates that were thought to be incapable of holding office. This information may not be of value to either the bitter foes or the ardent advocates of the non-partisan ballot, but it is doubtless worthy of their consideration.

of ballot.

In this group of men reputed to be of doubtful honesty are nearly one-fifth of those who were elected on both the non-partisan ballot and the partisan ballot.

Personality.

A slightly higher percentage of the candidates elected under both systems of voting have a favorable personality than do those who were elected under one system exclusively.

Occupations.

There is a rather decided contrast between the number of professional men in the non-partisan and partisan groups. The ratio is 37 to 22. Some interesting contrasts in this connection are: Four civil engineers in the non-partisan group and not any in the partisan group; 12 lawyers as contrasted with five; five newspaper editors as contrasted with two.

The most striking differences in occupation between the non-partisan and partisan men are found in group 2a; here the proportions are 85 as compared with 41. On the basis of this information one might infer that the group of men who have been successful executives and business men, judging by their occupations, belong preeminently to the non-partisan group. Many people who favor the use of the non-partisan ballot in local affairs do so because they believe that this sort of men will then be elected—men who have demonstrated their ability in the management of their own affairs.

In the next group, 2b, the ratio is 26 to 40. The majority of men in this class are on a lower economic and cultural plane than the majority of the men in either of the above classes. The men elected in the partisan era predominate here.[16] In the remaining groups the proportions are fairly even. One cannot look over these figures regarding occu-

[16]The problem of grouping the occupations into different classes is, in certain cases a very difficult one; often the distinguishing line that separates certain positions from others is not easy to discover. In making the eight occupation groups the writer considered not only

pations without feeling that a somewhat more substantial class of men was chosen in the non-partisan period than in the partisan period.

Other Public Offices Held.

It is evident that the non-partisan ballot did not exclusively produce a new class of candidates that had never before held public office. Thirty-one per cent have held some public office other than that of councilman as contrasted with only seventeen per cent in the partisan group. Of the non-partisan group thirty-four per cent had been members of the old select and common council whereas only seventeen per cent of the partisan group had once served in that body. This rather surprising information may be explained in part by the fact that the old select and common council was abolished in 1913 and candidates were not chosen on party tickets until 1919, whereas the non-partisan era dates from 1913 to 1919. Solely on the basis of the time element one would expect a greater number of officials from the old council in the early non-partisan than in the comparatively late partisan council. This information does not lead one to believe that a new class of candidates was invariably elected in the non-partisan era—candidates who had never stood for election save when the non-partisan ballot was used.

Party.

A smaller percentage of Republicans were elected in the non-partisan period than in the partisan period and a higher percentage of Democrats and Socialists. This seems to indicate that candidates of a minority party (in this case Democrats and Socialists) have a better chance of election when the non-partisan ballot is used than in those elections wherein these minority candidates must run on the ballot of their party. This view is somewhat weakened by the

(Footnote continued)
the name of the occupation, but he also took account of any additional comments and information regarding business experience or wealth that might help establish the occupation into a higher or a lower rank in the classification.

further fact that a higher percentage of independents were elected in the partisan periods than in the non-partisan period. The same thing is true regarding the independents elected in both periods. Several observers have said that the use of the non-partisan ballot in local elections helped educate the voter—helped him to realize the significance of the non-partisan idea. It helped him achieve a new attitude regarding municipal elections. It may be because of this fact that votes were cast for independents after 1919 which would never have been cast for these candidates had the voter not been prepared by the campaigns in which the non-partisan ballot had been used.[17]

Wealth.

There is a real disparity in the financial standing of the non-partisan and partisan groups. The non-partisan group had fifty-six per cent of its members in the $10,000 or better class and only one per cent of its members described as worth less than $500, while the partisan group furnished thirty-seven percent for the former class and five per cent for the latter. If wealth is a criterion of dependability one may safely say that the non-partisan ballot produced a more dependable or responsible class of officials than the partisan ballot.

The writer's conclusion concerning the calibre of men elected to office may be stated in two propositions. First, there are differences in the men elected in the two periods. Second, the non-partisan officials were superior to the others in respect to education, character, ability, occupation, and wealth.

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[17]The writer has often been told this story. Independent candidates have, in several instances explained their election on this basis. One Socialist told the writer that he could get elected to any one office the people in his city were qualified to elect men to, and all because he had served the people well during the non-partisan era, and they who had once suspected all Socialists of being anarchists and bolsheviks had found by experience that a man might effectively serve the city even though he is a Socialist. He added that he could never have convinced his city of this if the non-partisan ballot had not been used. The legislature took away the ballot, but they could not take away the training that it had given some of the people.

IV

THE INTEREST OF THE VOTER UNDER BOTH PARTISAN AND NON-PARTISAN SYSTEMS

Was the voter interested in municipal primaries and elections while the non-partisan ballot was used? Was his interest as great as it normally is when these municipal candidates are chosen on a party ballot? Were the majority of voters more concerned over the selection of the county officials who were chosen on a party ballot than in the election of those municipal officials who were selected on a ballot without party names?[1] Or, in other words, just what effect did the use of the non-partisan ballot have on the interest of the voter? Did it stimulate or diminish his interest? Certain statistical evidence on this point is presented on pages 168-169 below. In Chapter II on the "Attitude of the Press" evidence of a different nature is given concerning the interest manifested in these non-partisan primaries and elections. Materials similar to those included in the chapter on the press will be considered here. Their major importance lies in the fact that partisan elections were held on the same day, and usually the partisan county officials and the non-partisan commission government officials were chosen on the same ballot. Therefore, when the press singles out the non-partisan contest for special comment and gives equal or less attention to the party offices it is fair to believe that the use of the non-partisan ballot did not destroy the interest of the voter and that possibly interest was as great with this ballot as it would have been had a party ballot been used and the contest conducted along party lines. There seems to be no evidence for the truth of the statement that the voters are interested only in partisan contests, and that without party ballots elections are dull and lifeless affairs. In municipal government it is easily possible to conceive of a personal contest that will excite and engage

[1]Both county officials and city officials were chosen in the odd year and at the same election. Often both sets of candidates were placed on a single ballot; the non-partisan ones were set off by a heavy black line.

the attention of the electorate fully as much as any contest conducted along party lines. This is clearly the conclusion that the writer reached after reading different newspapers during the period of the municipal campaigns. The question is discussed here because one argument that is sometimes used against the non-partisan ballot is its untoward effect upon the voters' interest. It is contended that an election contest without a party ballot is bound to be a colorless affair and incapable of engaging the attention of the electorate. To what extent this is true cannot be easily determined; the table on pages 168-169 and the following newspaper comments are of importance in this connection:

In Hazleton, according to the "Standard,"

"The mayoralty contest in this city, however, coupled with the scrap for the commissionership, is the one big political topic which overshadows all other subjects."[2]

The "Reading Eagle" declared the center of interest to revolve around "the fight for the four seats in the council."[3]

In the municipal election two years later the "Eagle" said:

"In the city the greatest interest centered in the mayoralty contest between E. H. Filbert, Democrat, and G. M. Jones, Republican on the non-partisan ticket."[4]

The "Scranton Tribune-Republican's" comment on the non-partisan municipal primary in that city is of significance here.

"Never in the history of Scranton has there been so much keen and

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[2]September 12, 1913.

[3]November 1, 1913.

[4]November 3, 1915. This news item suggests a partisanship that could not well have been more pronounced, in this newspaper at least, if the election had been conducted with partisan ballots. It is quite evident that the non-partisan ballot did not strip the contest of interest but the extent to which it freed the municipal election of partisanship is less easily ascertained. In an earlier article on the primary in this same year (September 18, 1915) the "Eagle" observed, "while every contest for a party or non-partisan nomination at next Tuesday's primary has its own peculiar interest for a large body of voters, yet the most important on the municipal ticket will be that for mayor, while on the county ticket most interest attaches to the fight for judge of the Orphans Court." This item is cited for the county officials who were all chosen on party ballots, save judges, who were chosen on a ballot without any party name or insignia.

intelligent interest taken in an election. We doubt whether any city in the country has ever witnessed a more strenuous municipal campaign than that which terminated yesterday."[5]

The "Harrisburg Telegraph" had a front page article on, "Big vote out at early hour. City councilmanic contest leads in attention."[6] On the next day this newspaper carried an article under the caption, "The City's Big Contests," and said:

"The fight of greatest interest in Harrisburg and which had attracted state attention was that for the mayoralty nomination. . . ."

The "Erie Dispatch" made this observation:

"One thing can be said, however, and that is that there is better civic spirit and less narrow animosity than was shown two years ago. The vote for members of council shows a careful study of the capabilities of leading candidates."[7]

The "Chester Times" was convinced that "Never in the history of the city was there as much interest taken in a primary election as that of yesterday"[8] and this interest was due to the nomination of city officials rather than those of the county. At the following election it said that the interest of the voters was centered in the contest for councilmen.[9] A similar comment was found in the "Derrick" which said:

"At the primaries on Tuesday in Oil City the greatest interest was taken in the selection of the nominees for city council at the coming election; an analysis of the vote shows that a total of 8,544 ballots were cast for the candidates, or 2,138 for each group of four. This would show that 76% of the registered voters went to the polls, while about 700 failed to cast their ballots."[10]

In the 1913 primary the "Harrisburg Telegraph" complained about the fact that only a fraction of the voters were taking any interest in the contest, but this staunch defend-

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[5]September 17, 1913. Scranton is not a city of the third class, on account of its size; however, it used the non-partisan ballot in 1913 for the first time.
[6]September 21, 1913.
[7]September 23, 1915.
[8]September 17, 1913.
[9]November 3, 1913.
[10]September 19, 1913.

er of party ballots did not in any way suggest that this attitude of mind was due to the type of ballot used.[11] According to the "Republican" of Pottsville a similar condition existed in that city at the time of the primary.[12]

In examining the chart on pages 168 and 169 one has before him more exact evidence as to the voter's interest than has thus far been considered.[13] Here the writer finds that in the 1912-1919 period (before woman suffrage) the greatest percentage of the population voted in a presidential election, in 1912, and the smallest percentage that voted at any election voted at the gubernatorial election in 1918. The difference in these percentages is the fact that it indicates the degree of interest in two separate partisan contests—not one partisan and one non-partisan election. On the basis of these two elections some might assume that the electorate is more eager to express its views on presidential candidates than on those contending for the governor's office. A glance at the percentages for other presidential and gubernatorial elections further confirms this view. One may next observe that a greater percentage of voters voted in all three non-partisan mayoralty elections than in either of the two partisan gubernatorial elections. Here one has limited evidence for the opinion that the non-partisan ballot did not dim the interest of the voter, and if he stayed away from the polls at election time it was more likely to be due to

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[11]September 18, 1913.

[12]September 16, 1913.

[13]The writer regrets that more data could not be obtained concerning the votes cast at mayoralty elections. He examined newspaper files, corresponded with prothonotaries, county commissioners, and other officials, and visited a number of county seats to be able to present statistics given in the chart. About eighty dollars and much effort was spent on this phase of the problem. The vote for president and governor was easily taken from the "Pennsylvania State Manual," but as the writer has said, there is no single place where one can obtain the vote cast for municipal officials. The vote for councilman was not used in this connection, for each voter had the privilege of voting for four, and this made it impossible for the writer to estimate the number of votes cast. The mayor's term is for four years; in certain cities he was elected in 1913, 1917, and 1923, and in other cities the election occurred in 1915, 1919, and 1920. This accounts for certain omissions in the odd numbered columns.

some other factor than the type of ballot used. In comparing the percentage of the population that voted for mayoralty candidates under the partisan system in 1919 with that part of the population that cast a ballot for mayoralty candidates under the non-partisan system in 1913, 1915 and 1917, one finds that the percentage is higher for the former group than for the latter. However the difference is not great and it is difficult to explain its existence.

More striking than the disparities noted in comparing the vote for different offices is the greater difference in the tenor of the two periods—the era before woman suffrage, 1912-1919, and the woman suffrage era, 1920-1924. The potential electorate was approximately doubled and yet in no single instance did the percentage of the population that voted, double, or come remotely near doubling. The most surprising fact shown by these statistics is the obvious failure of the women in Pennsylvania cities to vote.

"Assuming that popular interest in the non-partisan elections was equal to that in the partisan elections, at the beginning, does the vote show that this continued to the end of the non-partisan system?" To this question the writer answers in the affirmative. The statistical material is not conclusive, but an examination of it reveals that a greater percentage of the population voted in 1915 than in 1913, and the slump in the single year, 1917, is not large, less than 1%, and the writer suggests that possibly the war was the cause of it. Then again if one compares the percentage of votes cast in the non-partisan primaries he will find that the lowest percentage of people voting was in 1913—the first year in which the non-partisan system was tried and in the final year of this non-partisan system 2.1% more people voted than in the beginning year.

Conclusions

The chart on the percentage of those that voted shows, as the writer has said, that the voter was about as much interested in municipal primaries and elections in which ballots without party labels were used as he was in those contests in which they were used, or as he was in presidential

Percentage of the total population in the several cities that voted for president, governor, and mayor. The presidential vote is under the columns 1912, 1916, 1920, 1924; the gubernatorial vote is under the columns of 1914, 1918, 1922; the mayorality vote is in the columns in the odd years. Sometimes it is 1913, 1917, 1921; and other times it is in 1915, 1919, 1923. The mayorality primary vote is directly below the mayorality election vote.

	1912	1913	1914	1915	1916	1917	1918	1919	1920	1921	1922	1923	1924
ALLENTOWN	17.8		14.5	12.5 15.	16.2		10.8	16.3 13.3	20.4		15.2	19.7 13.7	20.4
ALTOONA	15.6		13.3	13.2 14.7	14.4		9.5	14.4 27.5	20.		14.1	18.4 ?	22.5
BRADFORD	15.4		11.8	15.3 14.	15.8		10.	13.6 10.3	23.7		15.3	21.1 19.5	27.5
CARBONDALE	15.1		15.3	20.2 20.2	16.5		10.	21.1 18.1	32.5		18.6	40. 37.6	24.4
CHESTER	17.5		13.7	11.3 13.2	13.7		10.1	13.8 15.9	19.7		9.	20. 15.3	15.1
CONNELLSVILLE	16.9	P P	13.5		15.	11.9 14.4	11.3		23.6	26.8 19.	17.5		25.5
CORRY	17.8	15.9 13.2	15.5		17.2	13.2 18.2	9.8		26.5	23.9 22.8	18.8		22.4
EASTON	18.7		14.8	17.5 ?	18.8		10.7	16.2 12.4	19.2		16.9	22.5 16.4	23.3
ERIE	12.9		10.8	13.6 12.5	13.8		8.1	12.3 11.	13.3		10.6	17.1 20.9	17.6
FRANKLIN	16.5	15.3 ?	14.1		17.9	17.5 ?	12.3		25.7	14.2 ?	16.8		26.8
HARRISBURG	18.8		18.5	12.5 16..5	25.	15.4 12.2	14.6	17.6 17.5	29.6		24.8	23.2 18.9	33.2
HAZLETON	10.9	13.2 13.2	9.7		10.9	9.8 13.4	7.6	19.9		25.4 23.6	13.1		15.2
JOHNSTOWN	12.4		11.5	12.4 12.3	10.9		7.8	11.4 9.8	17.8		28.2	15.9 ?	20.3
LEBANON	18.3		15.2	15.5 13.7	15.8		9.7	14.1 15.2	20.2		13.4	15.7 16.2	18.5

	1912	1913	1914	1915	1916	1917	1918	1919	1920	1921	1922	1923	1924
LOCK HAVEN	20.2		17.8	15.3 ?	18.9		13.4	18. ?	25.2		16.	24. ?	31.
McKEESPORT	12.5	13.2 13.1	11		12.1	13.7 13.7	8.		14.4	17. 14.9	11.5		19.3
MEADVILLE	16.5	14.2 10.4	14.5		16.1	15.2 16.5	11.1		24.8	22.6 20.2	9.5		28.8
MONONGAHELA	14.6		11.9	15. ?	13.8		9.2	18.8 ?	19.5		12.	18.7 ?	21.7
NEW CASTLE	12.6		9.9	15.3 16.6	12.6		7	12.9 ?	17.9		12.	17.2 ?	19.8
OIL CITY	16.8		12.	19.7 ?	15.7		8.4	12.4 ?	17.7		12.	20.3 ?	21.8
PITTSTON	9.5	17.3 14.7	12.		13.1	22.9 11.7	10.2		20.3	22. 32.1	17.5		20.3
POTTSVILLE	18.8	17. 9.5	16.1		18.2	13.5 16.2	13.4		26.4	17.9 24.9	22.		17.5
READING	17.6		14.	16.6 15.5	16.8		11.4	15.8 ?	23.4		16.6	18.6 14.1	23.8
TITUSVILLE	16.1		15.8	12.3 ?	16.9		10.	16.9 ?	25.8		16.2	28.5 ?	26.
UNIONTOWN	16.9		16.8	15.8 16.	18.		13.3	18.4 12.7	35.		23.4	28.6 27.8	26.4
WILKES BARRE	12.1		23.1	14.6 15.3	14.5		19.7	16.7 16.6	19.1		16.2	27. 26.	19.3
WILLIAMSPORT	18.		14.4	17.4 18.3	17.2	12.7 13.8	12.4	16.2 14.3	22.8		17.	25.8 21.4	30.
YORK	22.		18.5	19.1 17.5	20.8		15.4	21.2 17.5	27.2		23.1	30. 26.6	28.3
AVERAGE	16.	15.1 12.3	14.3	15.2 15.4	15.9	14.5 14.4	10.2	15.9 15.1	21.5	21.7 22.5	16.3	22.2 21.1	23.1

elections, and definitely more than he was interested in gubernatorial elections. This evidence tends to strengthen the evidences of the voter's interest as revealed by the writer's study of the press. Part of this idea may be obtained by reading the passages that have been cited, but to fully appreciate the material or lack of material in the press on this point one must read the local newspapers in the two periods. The sixteen newspapers that the writer examined more decidedly indicated an increased interest in the non-partisan elections over the partisan ones than is indicated by a study of the percentages of the population that voted in the several elections between 1912 and 1924. The writer finds no reason for believing that party ballots must be used to arouse the interest of the voter and bring him to the polls on election day. An election means a contest, but a contest does not necessarily mean partisanship. If it did the Vare, Pepper, Pinchot senatorial primary would not have been a more bitter fight than the Vare-Wilson election that followed. The words Republican and Democratic loom large in municipal campaigns, but sometimes an issue or a personality looms larger still.

V

CAMPAIGNS

The independent in politics, the candidate of the minority party, the non-organization man who was forced to develop his own campaign plans, had a better chance of winning a nomination to some municipal office when the non-partisan ballot was in use than he now has under the partisan system. That this was so was generally believed by something over a majority of the non-partisan candidates, and this idea consequently tended to increase the number of free lance candidacies in the local campaigns, and for the same reason these campaigns were often fought with a vim that is sometimes lacking in our current local contests. To this extent campaign methods were likewise influenced, and candidates made in general a more persistent and direct attempt to reach the eye and the mind of the voter than they now do. Then the candidate was certain to advertise in the local newspapers[1] and not once but many times. He used placards that were placed in store windows, shops, homes, and nailed on telephone poles. He sometimes put his appeal on printed handbills that were distributed thruout entire sections of a city, if not the whole city. Personal interviews are part of every political campaign and they were especially prominent in the non-partisan period. The candidate could not interview all of the voters and he sent letters to many of them. Mass meetings and rallies were held—sometimes, as in the case of York in 1913, these meetings were non-partisan and composed of interested members of all parties, but often they were party affairs. Some candidates created their own party organizations that reached into all of the precincts, or in other cases, a majority of precincts or districts of their city. Sometimes this organization work was done by one representative in a dis-

[1]The exception was invariably the candidates who were backed by a compact organization. One with less tangible support would rarely risk omitting this method of appeal to the sovereign voter.

trict or again a committee of several members served the candidate. Civic organizations were active in many of these local campaigns in their attempt to determine the views of candidates on public questions and then enlighten the public. Altho the press—or a great majority of the newspapers—constantly described in partisan language the campaigns in which the non-partisan ballot was employed, it did describe these campaigns, and in more than one significant instance it came out strongly and openly for and against certain sets of candidates.

The "Harrisburg Telegraph" for November 3, 1913, said that there was a "general opinion that the campaign has been the cleanest in years under the Clark Act." According to it:

"non-partisan methods in municipal politics are successful, in the opinion of practically all of the eight candidates for council who finished the first campaign under such a system today. That the new law has made this campaign the most clean and the quietest in years is the general opinion."[2]

The campaigning itself consisted of strenuous personal work and publicity campaigns. The "Telegraph" quotes one candidate as saying:

"I have sent out a letter to every voter in this city setting forth my view on the way the city should be governed, bringing before them my experience of ten years in councilmanic matters. My campaign has been conducted through personal work mainly."[3]

Another candidate said:

"There has been less done or said this year to hurt the character of the individual candidates than ever. In this way at least the non-partisan idea has worked out successfully so that the campaign has been cleaner this year than ever before. I have campaigned by making personal calls on the voters of the city, visiting the shops, homes and stores. I have tried to see every voter in the city, spending all my time making personal calls."[4]

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[2]This is, of course, the opinion of the paper when the flush of novelty was still upon the non-partisan system. Later the "Telegraph" was one of the system's bitterest enemies and saw no benefit whatever in it. However, the writer has no evidence that would lead him to believe that the majority of campaigns in the non-partisan period were less clean than the campaigns of the partisan period.

[3]November 3, 1913.

[4]Ibid.

This personal factor, this face to face contact, is important in all political campaigns and it was especially important in 1913 and after that time when the non-partisan ballot was used. According to the "Pittson Gazette", "the voter cannot go a block on Main street without collecting a quantity of cards and being button-holed and appealed to by half a dozen or so of candidates."[5] The candidates in Pittston were not the only workers in the campaign. Volunteer workers were also active and one is reported to have had twenty-five men working for him.[6] In addition to this personal campaigning in 1913 there were a great many newspaper announcements, window cards, and various sorts of banners used.[7]

In York also the candidates did a great deal of personal campaigning before the 1913 election; and on election day a number of them were at the polls themselves while workers electioneered for them back in the various wards.[8] In 1915 in York the opponents of one of the non-partisan nominees for mayor, and two of the nominees for council, printed circulars containing attacks on those nominees, and, according to the "York Dispatch," 10,000 of these circulars were sent to voters in addressed envelopes.[9]

In the 1913 campaign in Reading the Socialists distributed cards bearing pictures of the four candidates with the motto, "Reading for the Workers." Under this heading followed the platform of the party:

"To legislate and administer the affairs of the city in the interest of the greatest number—the working class—we pledge ourselves, if elected, to stand by our word like men and enforce our platform to the best of our ability. Join with the workers in their own struggles, in their own behalf."[10]

The great majority of candidates for council in 1913 in Reading had a large number of volunteer workers. At the election time friends of the candidates offered their auto-

[5]September 12, 1913.
[6]Pittston "Gazette," September 16, 1913.
[7]Ibid., September 2, 1913.
[8]"York Dispatch," September 16, 1913.
[9]October 29, 1915.
[10]"Reading Eagle," September 7, 1913.

mobiles and were active at the polls themselves.[11]

One of the outstanding candidates for council in the 1915 election in Reading drew forth this comment from the "Eagle" for August 30, of that year:

"He is making no appeal to any faction of the party, not even to any particular party, for support; as of all the candidates, it is expected that Mr. Jones will most closely represent the purpose of the non-partisan law, taking the mayoralty and councilmanic fight out of the party column at the primaries and the elections. Although a staunch Republican, it is claimed that Mr. Jones will attract to his standard many independents and many Democrats. In business circles his candidacy is being endorsed by many individuals who are interested in politics. They include, it is said, men from both wings of the Republican party and from the Democracy as well. Among his signers are several men who have been opposed to the reign of Senator Penrose."

This particular candidate had a committee of 100 members named to work for his nomination.[12] The "Eagle" declared this primary campaign to be one of the most strenuous and costly campaigns ever entered into by the candidates. It estimated that enough political cards were used to carpet every square inch of ground space in one of the biggest townships in Berks county.[13]

A. J. Smith, candidate for mayor of Hazleton spoke to more than five hundred people at a meeting on the corner of Pine and Broad streets during the 1913 primary campaign. He discussed his attitude regarding the issues before the electorate. According to the "Standard" this was the first time that a candidate for mayor had taken the stump in a local political campaign.[14] In Williamsport five of the candidates for city commissioner gave their views and their platforms in 1913 before the members of the civic club.[15]

The "Harrisburg Patriot" for September 4, 1915, carries this news item:

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[11]Ibid., September 16, 1913.

[12]"Reading Eagle," September 15, 1915.

[13]Ibid., September 19, 1915. It also reported the fact that placards of candidates were posted all over the polling places at 10th and Penn Streets. (September 21, 1915.)

[14]August 30, 1913.

[15]"Gazette and Bulletin," August 29, 1913.

"Sheesley starts active canvass for mayoralty. 'I stand for an honest, clean and moral administration.' With this as his pledge, Harry F. Sheesley, non-partisan candidate for mayor, will start an active personal canvass of the entire city Monday. He has a pocketful of invitations to visit this and that section and he plans to accept them all."

Newspaper Advertising

The amount of newspaper advertising done by primary and election candidates depended somewhat upon the year in which the election took place and was directly influenced by the nature of the contest in the different cities using the non-partisan ballot. However, candidates in all of the cities that the writer is familiar with advertised far more in 1913 than in 1915 or 1917, and an overwhelming majority of the candidates in these cities did more—much more—advertising in 1915 than in 1917.[16] Commission government and the non-partisan system were new in 1913 and more candidates contended in this year than in any later year. This probably explains why there was more advertising in 1913 than in either 1915 or 1917. In this first year the newspapers usually carried, one, two, and sometimes three pages of advertising daily for a two, three, and four week period before the primary. The majority of successful primary candidates would continue to advertise until the election.

Allentown has two leading daily newspapers—the "Chronicle and News" and the "Call." The writer examined the file of the "Chronicle and News" from August 18, 1913, to September 16, 1913, and found that from 12 to 27 political advertisements appeared in the "Chronicle and News" each week-day. The nearer the primary election day the more the candidates advertised in the newspapers. These advertisements were of slightly different sizes and types. The majority of them were not more than four by six inches in size. Many of them carried the picture of the candidate

[16]The Reading and Altoona campaigns of 1917 were very lively and because of the issue in Altoona, and the supposed issue in Reading the above statement would not be true in these two cases. As a general rule, however, very little newspaper advertising was done in 1917. As the writer has said, in this year the majority of newspapers examined gave their first page to war news on election day.

with his name above the picture, and the words—"For City Council"—below.

A still more common type of advertisement was the political card. This gave the name of the candidate and the name of the office that he was running for. An examination of other newspapers reveals the following types of advertisements that were more or less commonly used in this non-partisan period, altho these two advertisements just described were the sort most frequently met with.

"To the Voters of Chester:

If you desire to cast your vote for a man who is in full harmony and sympathy with the spirit of the new form of government—who is strictly an independent candidate not subject to the influence of any man or clique of men, and who is answerable only to The Voters, you will find such a man in C. M. C. Lewis."[17]

"LOOK FOR
No. 9
On the Non-Partisan Ballot
For he is the man that does things."[18]

T. Woodward Trainer, secretary of the board of trade and a non-organization man and independent in local politics, was a candidate for city council in Chester in 1917. In the primary campaign the "Times" carried eleven or more full page advertisements urging the voters to support T. Woodward Trainer for council. These advertisements were usually signed by a group of 13 prominent Chester business men. Mr. Trainer was nominated and he continued to wage a vigorous newspaper campaign for the election. After his nomination he was associated in his advertising with three other candidates for council, and full page and half page advertisements were again used to warn voters against the liquor ring and the machine.

"Vote for Chester's Freedom from Gang Politics.
Vote for
T. Woodward Trainer
William Ward
J. M. Hamilton
William Provost."[19]

[17]"Chester Times," August 30, 1913.
[18]Ibid., September 6, 1913.
[19]Ibid, October 30, 1917. There were also three or more half page

In the 1913 campaign in Harrisburg one of the candidates for the city commission had a series of daily talks, thirty-four in all, printed in the "Telegraph" during the period of the election campaign. This is one typical of many:

"Daily Talk No. 29
by
Benjamin F. Umberger
Candidate for City Council.

If your wife is sick you get a doctor, and in picking him you use your best judgment. You are not concerned about his politics or his friends, you want a doctor of standing and ability, the best. Just use the same method in picking your councilmen. Vote for a man who has studied municipal affairs, has had experience in them, and has been successful in them—in short—vote for Umberger."[20]

(His picture here.) John A. Affleck announces himself a candidate for city council under the commission form of government. Your support and influence solicited."[21]

"Who'll Wear the Breeches?
The Corporations of Harrisburg
or
The People?

Our candidates stand for the control of the city by the people, instead of by the corporations. They are all men who have been helping to do the world's work since they came into it; men with the skilled knowledge of the workshop and the railroad, men of practical experience; men of independent minds, with no hankering after corporation favor. In a word they are honest, capable working men. We present their names below:

For Mayor
Daniel L. Keister
Printer.
For Council
David K. Young
Plumber.
J. L. Yoder
Lately Railroad Engineer.

(Footnote continued)
advertisements in the "Times" in favor of these four men and signed by the unsuccessful primary candidates.

[20]"Harrisburgh Telegraph," October 27, 1913.

[21]Ibid., August 28, 1913. This was one of the two or three types of advertisements that was most commonly used.

J. A. Parthemore
Striking Street Car Employee.
Thomas P. Moran
Clothing Salesman.

Citizens we urge you to vote for all of them. Do not cut. The corporations have many candidates in the race to split our forces. Don't be fooled. Be true! We need you and you need victory. Stand firm tomorrow! Don't forget to vote for George A. Herring, a young railroad man, candidate for School Director. He has an awful punch for grafters.
Workingmen's Non-Partisan League."[22]

"Cast a 'Bullet' Vote for
Ralph W. Tillotson
for City Council.
Vote for no one else. We have no deal with any other candidates!
Vote the Straight Socialist Ticket!.
City Central Committee,
Socialist Party of Erie."[23]

"Vote for Cullum for Council
Why?
Because
He is a successful businessman.
He knows Meadville's wants.
He is a good citizen.
He is a hustler and hustlers do things.
He was one of the best presidents that the chamber of commerce ever had.
He will represent the city and not any class or clique.
He has no ax to grind, and can work for Meadville with a clear mind."[24]

An independent candidate in Reading prepared a newspaper advertisement in which he was pictured climbing a pole. Beside the picture was this statement:

"Since my name is 23rd on the Ballot
Watch me climb
I can't slide down without getting in a hole
So its up to me to climb this Pole
Gimme a Boost

[22]Ibid., September 18, 1917.
[23]November 6, 1917. The socialists openly included their party name in their printed appeal for votes. The Republican and Democratic party candidates rarely did this. Their injection of partisanship was more subtle, or at least, less open.
[24]"Meadville Tribune and Republican," September 20, 1915.

B. Frank Ruth

Non-Partisan candidate for
City Councilman."[25]

The following half page advertisement appeared in the "Hazleton Standard" for September 5, 1913.

"Charles A. Kehoe
Progress Forward
for City Mayor.

I ask my fellow citizens to consider calmly the main issue of this campaign—that is, The Man, and I am confident of the result."

The following plea was made for racial equality:

"Why not have every nationality represented on Pittston's Board of City Commissioners? Show your public spiritedness and impartiality by voting for
Verome Valvolo."[26]

"John H. Mullen for Mayor

"Fellow-citizens: Because the glaring defects in the present administration of city affairs warrant a change in politics, I have become a candidate for Mayor. There is really one issue involved: Better Government for Pittston. I believe no serious-minded citizen is satisfied with the present unbusinesslike methods. Your business has been made subservient to the selfish desires of a political ring. This is your city, and you have the right to dictate that it be run honestly and economically."[27]

"These gentlemen defy and challenge their opponents and the ex-boss who is managing their campaign sub rosa to point to a single blemish in their private or public life."[28]

(The names of the candidates were also given.)

In the 1913 campaign in York a town meeting was held for the purpose of organizing a citizens' committee and formulating public opinion on issues and candidates. A program was adopted and candidates were asked to state their position on the various planks in the platform. This partly explains the following advertisement which occupies a half page in the "Dispatch" for September 13, 1913:

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[25]"Eagle," September 16, 1915.
[26]"Pittston Gazette", September 6, 1913.
[27]Ibid., September 6, 1913.
[28]Ibid., October 28, 1913.

"To the Voters of the City of York:
If the principles I uphold, my business ability and integrity appeal to you, I earnestly invite your support. Clayton D. Smith. . . . "

Immediately below and on the left was given the preamble and platform adopted at the town meeting held September 4, 1913. In the center was a picture of the candidate and below on the right was the "straight forward reply" of Mr. Smith.

2. CAMPAIGN EXPENSES

Is there any difference in the cost of campaigning for office when the non-partisan instead of the partisan ballot is used? Does the non-partisan ballot increase or diminish the expense of obtaining nomination and election to municipal office? This question is bound to come up in any serious discussion of the non-partisan ballot. What the answer is depends much upon the connections and associations involved in the candidacy that the interrogator has in mind, for this query can most accurately be answered in the light of the nature of the candidate's strength and the organization of the community in which he is seeking office. If he is a party organization man[28] and is running for office in a city like Harrisburg, Reading, or Chester where there are one or more closely knit party organizations, he will often save the expense of at least one campaign if party ballots are used.[29] For then he is likely to secure his par-

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[28]That is, a man who is actively and materially supported by the Republican or Democratic organizations.

[29]The case of T. W. Trainer, who was twice elected to the Chester council during this period is one in point. Mr. Trainer is a non-organization man and he spent $1,027 to secure the Republican nomination, while he won the election on an expenditure of $100. The Republican party label in Chester, like the Church at Rome, offers protection to all who come within its fold. There were three other candidates nominated for the city commission, and these three were supported by the organization. One spent less than $50.00, another $80.00, and the third spent $474.09. There was no reported election expenditure for any of the four successful commission candidates of more than $126.00. This seems to indicate that the fighting that was done was done at the primary. The writer was not able to obtain the expense record for T. W. Trainer in the 1917 primary, but according to his record for the election, he spent $2,536.00. Here there were two fights, one in the primary and another in the election.

ty's nomination without great personal effort, and in part this would be true of his election, when it takes place in those cities in which a Republican nomination invariably means succes at the election. The party ballot tends to make the primary and the election a closed-corporation affair. When a ballot without a party name is used the party organization may still be tremendously effective and elect its men, but it must fight to do it, and herein lies the difference. This fight takes time and money, and the organization does not have the psychic support of the good old party name standing beside that of the candidate's. The primary in one of these non-partisan contests may degenerate—to use the word of an organization man—into a "free-for-all." Therefore more money may be expended to secure the nomination than would otherwise be the case; and, conversely, the independent or the non-organization man will probably say that the non-partisan ballot reduces the cost of campaigning. He does not need to fight against the party name—it is no longer the exclusive possession of an organization. The organization, of course, remains and fights, but the independent can better fight the organization alone than the organization plus the party name. Therefore, if the non-partisan ballot changes the cost of campaigning it is because the nature of the contest is changed. This may explain why the party organization men and certain other people who oppose the use of the non-partisan ballot say it costs more to campaign when this ballot is used, while advocates of the ballot often say it reduces the cost of election—both may be describing the situation as it affects them. If, on the other hand, this ballot does not affect the cost of campaigning it might indicate the absence of a strong party organization or an independence on the part of the community in regard to the historic party names—Republican and Democrat—that is unknown in some of the larger cities of the third class in Pennsylvania. The citizens of Corry may consider the man and not the party regardless of the ballot used, but this is not

true of Chester, Reading, Harrisburg, or Wilkes Barre.[30]

In addition to questionnaire data and personal interviews on this question the writer was able to examine the official expense accounts that were filed with the clerk of the Court of Quarter Sessions in Dauphin County and in Deleware County.[31]

Official Records

An examination of the filed expense records of 17 primary candidates[32] in the 1913 councilmanic campaign at Harrisburg reveals the fact that the candidates' money was spent for several main purposes. The most important expense and the one that invariably took up more than three-fourths of the total expenditure, unless there was a heavy campaign committee contribution, was advertising—newspaper, cards, posters, handbills and pamphlets.

The cost of the "dissemination of information"[33] is likely to be an important item on any expense account. Associated with this is the money spent for watchers, clerks, and postage. The itemized account of W. H. Lynch, one of the successful primary candidates in 1913, may be cited to more concretely present this idea of the purposes for which money was spent in this municipal campaign. Save for the small

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[30]Allentown more nearly resembles the smaller than the larger cities in connection with independence in voting.

[31]The Act of March 5, 1906, provides that when the amount shall exceed $50.00 "a full, true, and detailed account of each and every sum of money contributed, received, or disbursed . . ." must be filed within fifteen days after the primary or within thirty days after the election. In case the aggregate receipts or disbursements of a candidate, in connection with any nomination or election shall not exceed $50.00 a sworn statement to that effect must be filed, for all offices that are not state-wide, with the Clerk of the Court of Quarter Sessions. However, the Court of Quarter Sessions is not required to preserve the record for more than two years and does it rarely. Fortunately the Dauphin County Court has the Harrisburg primary and election expense records for the period beginning with 1913 and the Delaware County Quarter Sessions Court has certain important records for the city of Chester since that time.

[32]Including the expense records of seven of the eight successful primary candidates.

[33]The disseminators of information may be called workers. The service that they render the candidate consists of winning him votes on election day; passing out handbills is likely to be only one of their duties.

amount of money expended for distributing cards this account is in character very much like many others in this group of seventeen.[34]

H. C. Townsend, cards	$ 1.75
The Telegraph Printing Co., cards and cut	5.25
W. F. Rayson, cards	3.00
The Non-Partisan, Adv.	6.00
The News, Adv.	1.80
The Telegraph Printing Co., cards, cut, adv.	9.25
The Patriot, Adv.	22.05
Harrisburgh Telegraph, Adv.	30.63
Telegraph Printing Co., cards	11.00
Star Independent, Adv.	20.05
O. Perry, Adv.	3.00
Wm. Fickes, Adv.	5.00
Adv. on Railroaders Card	1.50
Distributing Cards	5.00
Distributing Cards	5.00
Stationery and Postage	9.50
TOTAL	$139.78

According to these seventeen filed accounts no money was paid to any party campaign committee, or to any party club in this primary campaign. The clear and concrete traces of partisanship that were to be so much in evidence in the next campaign—that is, the 1913 election campaign, and in later campaigns—were not discernible on the face of the filed expense records in this non-partisan campaign. This new note of partisanship and the increase in average expenditures from $188.77 in the primary to $469.72 in the election are the most pronounced differences in the character of the expense accounts that were filed for the 1913 primary and election.

The itemized expense record for the election of W. H. Lynch, who was again successful, is typical of the nature of expenditure filed at this election:

[34]It is also representative of the expense accounts of 13 primary candidates—including the successful nominees—for city council candidates in Reading in 1913. Here too the main portion of the expenses in each itemized statement is charged to advertising, printing, messenger service and the like. These individual expenditures vary in size from $61.05 to $345.90 ("Reading Eagle," Oct. 2, 1913.)

Shuthers Advertising, Card	$ 2.50
Advocate (Newspaper) Adv. card	3.00
W. H. Smith, Adv. card	5.00
Shamrock Fire Co., Adv. card	5.00
Laundrymen (Club)	5.00
Royal Club Adv. card	5.00
Railroaders (Union) Adv. card	5.00
Mt. Pleasant (Fire Co.) Adv. card	10.00
Capitol City (Fire Co.) Adv. card	5.00
Susquehanna (Fire Co.) Adv. card	5.00
Hill News (News Stand)	5.00
West End Reporter (Newspaper) card	3.20
West End Republican Club, Adv. Card	10.00
Allison Fire Co., Adv. card	10.00
Bartenders (Union) Adv. card	5.00
Non-Partisan (Newspaper) Adv. card	6.00
Hill News (News Stand) Adv. card	3.37
Star Independent (Newspaper) Adv. card	7.20
Courier (Newspaper)	4.00
Daily Telegraph (Newspaper)	30.90
Advocate, Advertising card	10.00
Fred Ray (cut)	3.00
Patriot (Newspaper)	12.60
Postage	8.00
Stationery	7.75
Various persons for dissemination of information	162.50
U. Compson, (President First Ward Republican club)	10.00
R. Waters, President Seventh Ward Republican club)	10.00
M. Fickley, (President Sixth Ward Republican club)	10.00
E. Shell	5.00
W. Holland	5.00
TOTAL	$379.02

Beard makes the statement that the history of municipalities may be traced thru the record of their expenditures, and in the same way one might learn much about campaign methods by finding out the purposes, and their relative importance, for which the campaign money was expended. Certainly one could not argue that partisanship was not present in these official non-partisan campaigns in view of the contributions made by candidates to the Republican and Democratic party committees, and to partisan ward clubs.[35]

[35]However, this does not answer the more important question as to whether the Republican and Democratic party committees were as active in supporting municipal candidates in the official non-partisan period as they are in the present partisan era.

An examination of the tables on pages 187-190 reveals among other things the average expenditure of the primary and election candidates seeking public office, as well as the size of the average contribution made to some party committee—invariably this party committee was the Republican committee or the Democratic committee of Dauphin county. This party contribution usually represented one of a number of campaign expenditures that the candidate made, altho in some cases the favored candidate put all of his trust, that is his money, in a party committee.[36] The anomaly of the official non-partisan candidate making a contribution to a partisan committee did not escape the editorial eye of the local newspapers.[37] The expense record for W. H. Lynch

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[36]The following statement is the filed expense record of E. S. Meals, successful candidate for mayor in 1914 in Harrisburg:

"Paid $400.00 to C. C. Cumbler, Treasurer of the Dauphin County Republican Committee for legitimate campaign expenses."

[37]Under the caption—"Non-Partisan, But Gave Money to Democrats", the "Harrisburg Telegraph" for October 15, 1915, said that "Royal, Copelin and Gorgas each contributed $200.00 to Chairman Jones. Senator E. E. Beidleman not only charged John K. Royal, Owen M. Copelin and W. L. Gorgas, supposedly non-partisan candidates for city council, with contributing to the Democratic campaign fund for their re-nomination, but connected their names with a report filed as to their campaign expenses which he said is in distinct violation of the Corrupt Practices Act.

"Senator Beidleman quoted the Court Records to prove what he said. His speech was a reply to the criticism of Democratic bosses and newspapers censuring the Republican councilmanic candidates for contributing $100.00 each to the candidates campaign committee.

"The Court Records show that Howard W. Jones, Chairman of the Democratic City Committee, filed a report of primary expenses for the citizens campaign committee, under which disguise the Democratic committee operated at the primaries, containing these notes of contributions:

"By John K. Royal ----------$200.
By Owen M. Copelin ----------$200.
By W. L. Gorgas ----------$200."

Three days later this newspaper returned to the attack. "Because Messrs. Bowman, Lynch and Taylor have chosen ever since their election two years ago to confess their allegiance to the Republican party, rather than masquerade beneath a cloak of deception, Messrs. Royal and Gorgas, the two Democratic members of the city council and their newspaper mouthpiece, have accused them of not being in full accord with the spirit of the non-partisan law under which they were elected.

"At every turn the Republican members were charged with 'playing politics.' Whatever they did, no matter how commendable, they

for the election in 1919 may be presented as being representative of the expense records of the successful candidates for the city commission.[38] Twenty-six persons were listed as having received from $5 to $10 each for disseminating information, making a total expenditure for this purpose of $164.00.

For dissemination of information	$164.00
Dauphin County Republican Committee Contribution	200.00
Seventh Ward Republican club	10.00
Sixth Ward Republican club	10.00
West End Republican club	10.00
Riverside Fire Company, Adv. Card	5.00
Keystone Printing and Binding Company	30.50
Patriot News Printing Company, Adv.	13.65
Telegraph Printing Company	15.00
TOTAL	$458.15

An examination of other expense records for the 1919, 1921 and 1923 contests reveals little that would separate the campaigns, as described by the reported expenditures, in the non-partisan and partisan periods.[39] The most significant difference between expense records will often be found in comparing those of the defeated and successful election candidates. The individual elected to municipal of-

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(Footnote continued)
were 'playing politics.' . . . . Now far be it from us to accuse Messrs. Royal and Gorgas of shedding crocodile tears or their newspaper supporters of crying 'thief, thief,' to hide the depredations of the Democrats, but, if they have been sincere how comes it that Messrs. Royal and Gorgas and their Democratic colleague at the primaries, Mr. Copelin, each donated $200 to the Democratic Chairman Howard Jones to assure them of the Democratic machine bosses' support of nomination, and if there was no Democratic machine slate as we have been told, why was not some other Democrat out for council permitted to contribute to Chairman Jones? . . . . The much vaunted non-partisanism of Royal and Gorgas is of the kind that prompted them to donate $200 each to Democratic Chairman Jones in order that they might continue to be the favorite candidates of the Democratic machine bosses."

The "Patriot" was not slow to avail itself of the more than adequate evidence and make an appropriate reply.

[38]Mr. Lynch was elected to the city council in 1913, 1915, 1917 and 1919. During this period he was an organization man.

[39]The average primary expenditure in the three primaries in the partisan period was somewhat larger than those in the non-partisan period.

fice in Harrisburg during this period—1913 to 1923—was usually one who had made a contribution of several hundred dollars to the Republican committee of Dauphin county, while the defeated candidates at the final election had either made no contribution to any party committee or had made one of about $200 to the Democratic committee of Dauphin county.

The tables on pages 187-190 present the data that the writer was able to obtain regarding campaign expenditures in Chester. Here there was more money spent for watchers than in Harrisburg, and the contests were not waged between parties—for there is only the Republican in Chester—but between the party organization candidates and the independents, or non-organization candidates.[40]

AN ANALYSIS OF THE ELECTION EXPENSE RECORDS FOR THE CANDIDATES FOR MAYOR, CONTROLLER AND COMMISSIONER OF CHESTER FOR THE YEARS 1913 to 1921.

The records are filed with the clerk of the Quarter Sessions Court of Delaware County.

	1913	1915	1917	1919	1921
The lowest reported expenditure for any election candidate	Minus $50.00 [41]	Minus $50.00 [43]	$65.00	Minus $50.00 [45]	Minus $50.00 [47]

[40]The one successful independent candidate to be elected to the Chester council during this period listed, among others, the following items in his expense record for the primary campaign of 1917:

"Standard Detective Agency ---------- $ 85.00
Watchers ---------- 631.00
Dissemination of information ---------- 863.00"

Another non-organization candidate, who was nominated at the 1917 primary, but defeated in the election, spent more than $200 in advertising in the "Chester Times" and in addition $520 in the following manner:

"Burns Detective Agency (Philadelphia) ---------- $120.00
Watchers and Workers ---------- 200.00
Dissemination of Information ---------- 200.00"

It is possible that there would have been an accurate count of the votes cast regardless of whether or not detectives and other watchers were present at the polls, but evidently Messrs. Hamilton and Trainer did not think so, and judging by their success in this primary they knew what they were doing.

[41]Three election candidates spent less than $50.00
[43]Seven election candidates spent less than $50.00.
[45]One election candidate spent less than $50.00.
[47]One election candidate spent less than $50.00.

The highest reported expenditure for any election candidate	147..00	186.00	2536.00	126.00	100.00
The average reported expenditure for the election candidates	114.20	172.50	1153.71	113.00	100.00
The average reported expenditude for the candidates that were successful at the election	99.00 [42]	Minus 50.00 [44]	701.25	113.00 [46]	100.00 [48]
The percentage of the election candidates whose expense records were examined	100%	75%	87½%	37½%	50%

AN ANALYSIS OF THE PRIMARY EXPENSE RECORDS FOR THE CANDIDATES FOR MAYOR, CONTROLLER AND COMMISSIONER OF CHESTER FOR THE YEARS 1913 to 1923.

The records are filed with the clerk of the Quarter Sessions Court Delaware county.

	1913	1915	1917	1919	1921	1923
The lowest reported expenditure for any successful primary candidate	Minus $50.00 [49]	Minus $50.00 [50]	$88.00	Minus $50.00 [51]	Minus $50.00 [52]	Minus $50.00 [53]
The highest reported expenditure for any successful primary candidates	121.33	136.00	208.64	250.01	64.00	110.00
The average reported expenditure for the successful primary candidates	121.33	136.00	208.64	250.01	64.00	110.10
Percentage of successful primary candidates whose expense records were on file and examined	100%	67%	87%	67%	50%	62½%

AN ANALYSIS OF THE PRIMARY EXPENSE RECORDS FOR THE CANDIDATES FOR MAYOR, CONTROLLER AND COMMISSIONER OF HARRISBURG FOR THE YEARS 1913 to 1923

The records are on file with the clerk of the Quarter Sessions Court of Dauphin County.

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[42]Three successful election candidates spent less than $50.00.
[44]All of the successful election candidates spent less than $50.00.
[46]One successful election candidate spent less than $50.00.
[48]One successful election candidate spent less than $50.00.
[49]Five successful primary candidates spent less than $50.00.
[50]Six successful primary candidates spent less than $50.00.
[51]Three successful primary candidates spent less than $50.00.
[52]One successful primary candidate spent less than $50.00.
[53]One successful primary candidate spent less than $50.00.

	1913	1915	1917	1919	1921	1923
The lowest reported expenditure for any successful primary candidate	$95.90	Minus 50.00 [54]	Minus $50.00 [55]	$62.28	$82.29	Minus 50.00 [56]
The highest reported expenditure for any successful primary candidate	259.81	430.13	214.13	616.75	593.35	1031.46
The average reported expenditure for the successful primary candidates	188.77	161.64	110.00	312.33	394.07	635.97
Per cent of successful primary candidates whose expense records were on file and examined	87½%	92%	100%	54%	100%	87½%
Number of successful primary candidates that contributed to the Republican or Democratic committees of Dauphin county, or to some Republican Club in the city of Harrisburg	0	7	1	4	3	4
Percentage of successful candidates that so contributed	0	58%	10%	33%	75%	50%
Average contribution to a party organization by those contributing	0	$152.93	$45.00	$235.00	$335.00	$350.00

AN ANALYSIS OF ELECTION EXPENSE RECORDS FOR THE CANDIDATES FOR MAYOR, CONTROLLER AND COMMISSIONER OF HARRISBURG FOR THE YEARS 1913 to 1923.

The records are filed with clerk of the Quarter Sessions Court of Dauphin County.

	1913	1915	1917	1919	1921	1923
The lowest reported expenditure for any election candidate	$185.33	Minus $50.00 [57]	$198.05	$96.00	Minus $50.00 [58]	Minus $50.00 [59]

[54] One successful primary candidate spent less than $50.00.
[55] Three successful primary candidates spent less than $50.00.
[56] Four successful primary candidates spent less than $50.00.
[57] One candidate spent less than $50.00 at the election.
[58] Four candidates spent less than $50.00 at the election.
[59] Five candidates spent less than $50.00 at the election.

The highest reported expenditure for any election candidate	839.85	517.40	532.00	676.00	943.45	632.15
The average reported expenditure for the election candidates	438.90	264.72	302.82	378.07	771.36	423.50
The average reported expenditure for candidates that were successful at the election [60]	469.72	264.45	330.16	381.40	845.52	373.03
The percent of the election candidates whose expense records were examined	100%	83%	100%	67%	100%	87%
Number of election candidates that contributed to the Republican or Democratic party committees of Dauphin county, or to some Republican club in the city of Harrisburg	8	8	7	7	3	5
Number of successful election candidates that contributed to the Republican or Democratic party committees of Dauphin County or some Republican Club in the city of Harrisburg	4	5	2	6	2	3
Average party contbution for those contributing	83.10	161.87	124.16	225.71	400.00	250.00
Percent of successful election candidates that so contributed to party committees	100%	83%	33%	100%	100%	75%

Conclusions

According to the statistical data presented in this chapter there was a greater difference in the cost of campaigning for office in the two cities, Chester and Harrisburg, than in the two periods—1913-1919 and 1919-1923. Our evidence

[60] One successful candidate at the election spent less than $50.00.

is incomplete, but on the basis of that which is presented the writer believes that certain other factors in these local campaigns had more effect upon the amount expended than the type of ballot used. The personality of the candidates, the strength of the party organization and the interest of the electorate are likely to be of controlling importance in any political contest. Mechanical devices such as ballots have a bearing upon this question, but usually an indirect one. Otherwise the successful candidates in the 1917 Chester election would not have spent more than 14 times as much as the successful candidates of 1915 expended in the same city, nor would the average expenditure for the candidates that were elected in Chester in the 1913-1923 period have been less than one half of the average expenditure of these candidates that were elected in Harrisburg during the same period. The same type of ballots was used in both cities—to account for the difference in the cost of campaigning one must look elsewhere.

More money was expended by the successful candidates in the partisan period in these two cities than in that period in which the non-partisan ballot was used. To what extent this increase was due to change in the value of the dollar is a question that must be considered. More important than this is the fact that there were much wider differences in the money expended in individual years than in the two periods or the two cities. It is in part because of this central point that the writer's final answer to the original question: "Is there any difference in the cost of campaigning for office when the non-partisan instead of the partisan ballot is used?" must depend, as he has said, on the nature of the candidate's strength; that is, is he an organization man or must he stand without the benefit of a party organization; and on the state party sentiment in the community in which the contest takes place—that is, on the extent to which the electorate is willing to passively follow the lead of the dominant party.

VI

APPOINTMENTS AS A TEST OF PARTISANSHIP IN THE PARTISAN AND NON-PARTISAN PERIODS

Appointments may be said to be the backbone of politics. More contests are waged over them than over anything else in government. So one might advantageously study the effect of the non-partisan ballot from this angle. The question one asks is whether in the period in which this ballot was used appointments were made more truly on the basis of fitness for office than in the following period when party ballots were employed. Was there more of the spoils idea in connection with appointments in the one period than in the other? A penetrating study of the facts that would adequately answer this question for any one of the cities of the third class would necessarily reveal much about the effect of the non-partisan ballot on the work of city councils; and the writer has given some time to a consideration of Reading's experience. He chose this city largely because of interviews that he had had with several of its officials. In one of the most vivid of these the situation was explained to him in the following words:

"The first non-partisan council stood three Republicans and two Democrats. I said to my colleagues in council, 'Let us not forget that we have been elected on a non-partisan ballot, and we must act in a non-partisan manner regarding appointments.' I was then in the majority and we did not remove men from office solely because they were Democrats. Later when I was one of the minority I reminded the council of my former attitude and in 1915 my Republicans were not thrown out.[1] The commissioners were very fair at this time. However, when party ballots were used in 1919 a new spirit straightway made itself felt among the councilmen—they now had the feeling

[1]To the writer's statement that more men were removed from office in 1916 than in any year from 1920 to 1926 when party ballots were in use this ex-councilman replied that 1916 was an exception, and this was the result of the election of two partisan Democrats who would not observe the spirit of the non-partisan act. However, in spite of this partisan activity in the middle of the non-partisan period the writer was given to understand that partisanship was the exception and non-partisanship was the rule.

that to the victor belong the spoils of office. Abundant proof of this statement may be obtained by examining the record of councilmanic appointments."[2]

The writer next discussed the question of appointments with a former city clerk of Reading—one who had held office during the non-partisan period. He said that Mayor Filbert started the partisan move in 1916—in that year there were more than fifty policemen removed. He added:

"Before Filbert's era partisanship did not count. Democrats had been appointed under a Republican administration. About 55 per cent of the appointees were Democrats from the beginning of commission government until January 1, 1916. William Witman changed every man in the department of public safety. There were a dozen changes in this department the day it was organized. The non-partisan ballot had a good effect in all the departments save the bureau of police and the department of public safety.[3] In 1915 William Witman and the Democratic party organization said appointments were the issue.—'You (Democrats) can't get appointed unless you elect Democrats to the commission.' Certain Democratic policemen took an active part in the campaign and worked for Witman as a Democrat."

A present city official in Reading agrees with the persons that the writer has just quoted. He also believes that save for the exceptions in 1916 when removals were made because of the partisan activity of Messrs. Filbert and Witman there was much less partisanship shown in connection

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[2]A concrete instance was given in support of the opinion that officials were now removed for partisan and personal reasons. E. Nuebling, a water engineer, was dropped by the present administration because he discovered that one of the councilmen was stealing water from the city.

[3]Since the passage of the civil service law in 1917 the removal of men for partisan reasons is difficult. This civil service law is about 90% effective. However, a man may be reduced in rank to a patrolman, and Sergeant Templin was demoted to a patrolman.

The desire for office was in nowise limited to Reading. The "York Dispatch" for October 20, writes:

> "'To the victor belong the spoils' was the policy favored by several of the speakers last night at the smoker and rally held by the Young Men's Democratic Society. . . . "

In an editorial on "The New Administration" (1915) the "Pottsville Republican" said:

> "If political precedent is to be followed by the new city council the city may look for a complete clean out of the administration forces when council is reorganized the first of the year."

with appointments and removals in the non-partisan period than in the present partisan one.

In other connections the writer has referred to the "Reading Eagle" as a partisan newspaper. It is not surprising to find this paper discussing Mr. Frees proposed candidacy for mayor in the following businesslike way:

"The G. O. P. men 'higher up' have informed local leaders that to place no Republican nominee in the field for mayor would be a political mistake and a surrender of vast amounts of patronage for the next four years."[4]

However, these signs of partisanship are pale when compared with the more direct and robust expressions of party loyalty that were proclaimed in 1919 in Reading. The following ideas were expressed before the primary:

"It was decided to hear from the candidates for office. The first speaker was W. A. Witman. He said, 'I appreciate the party giving me the nomination for mayor without a fight. If successful you will find me a Democrat. I want the co-operation of the entire party. I am ready to stand any assessment that may be levied. If elected I will co-operate with the committee in making appointments and take suggestions from the ward chairman.'

"E. R. Gerber for city council stated he was glad that the leaders of the party are awake to the importance of this election. 'The rank and file are interested,' said Mr. Gerber, 'organization is needed to conduct a successful campaign. Let us have party loyalty. I have been voting for 40 years and have always supported the Democratic ticket. . . .'

" 'There is no need of everyone making a profession of faith,' said John B. McDonough, for council. 'I have served on many committees and fought many battles for the party. I believe that if we have a Democratic council the offices should be filled by Democrats. The selections and suggestions should come from the Chairmen and workers. No man who is honored by the party is bigger than the party. The successful candidates owe a duty to those who have labored for years for the party. I believe in Democrats standing by Democrats and while loyal to the party serve the community as well. . . .'

"Edward C. Hunter, for council, said he was a Democrat and if the majority of council is Democratic he will put Democrats in office, if elected. . . .

" 'Everybody knows I am a Democrat,' said W. Oscar Miller, for council. 'I am one of the Jacksonian kind that believes in rewarding those who stand by the party'."[5]

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[4]Nov. 3, 1915.
[5]Nov. 3, 1915.

In 1919 three of the members of the Reading council were Democrats and two were Republicans. However, in the municipal election of that year the majority shifted to the Republicans, and beginning with 1920 there were to be four Republicans and one Democrat in control of the council.

"Since the non-partisan feature of the Clark Act was knocked out, bringing on an old time party fight at the election, the Republicans will not hesitate to use 'ripper' methods at City Hall it is said. When the new council gets busy on appointments, Democratic employees, who have been holding city jobs for many years, may be dropped and replaced by Republicans. Councilman Hunter, the only Democrat, because of his never failing courtesy, is likely to be shown consideration by the Republicans and may be permitted to make his own appointments in the departments to which he will be assigned as superintendent. However, it is possible that his own appointments will not be approved by the other members. 'To the victors belong the spoils,' is the slogan recalled by some Republicans, who hold that every city position should be filled by Republicans.

"The police, engineering, plumbing, and electrical departments are under civil service and could be changed. Of the seven sergeants, five are Democrats, and two Republicans, altho Chief of Police Miller was appointed by Mayor Filbert, a Democrat, he is a Republican....

"City purchasing agent and paymaster, salary $1,800, now held by Steward L. Shoaaber, Democrat.

"Meat and milk inspector, salary $2,000 now held by G. R. Featherolf; assistant meat and milk inspector, salary $1,500, now held by S. D. Rothenberger. Featherolf is a Republican.

"Mechanician, salary $1,700, now held by C. S. Schoaaber, Democrat.

"Superintendent of parks, salary $2,160, now held by W. I High, Republican.

"Of the six highway foreman, four are Democrats. The salary is $1,300.

"The revenue control clerk receives a salary of $1,800."[6]

The table was all set and the food was in full view of all the hungry office seekers. However, the onslaught was less formidable than a conservative newspaper reader might expect. In 1916 Mayor Filbert and Councilmen Witman and Tyson dismissed 82 office holders from the city service, 57 of whom were policemen and 11 more were park guards.[7]

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[6] "Eagle," Nov. 6, 1919.

[7] "A Study of Appointments in Reading from 1913 to 1925," done under supervision of the writer. Unpublished seminar thesis, Ursinus College, of G. Grove Haines, who examined the "Reading Journal of Council" for the six non-partisan years from 1914 to 1920 and the six following partisan years from 1920 to 1925, inclusive,

This same majority appointed 149 men to office; 88 in the bureau of the police and 23 as park guards in this year. In the two preceding years only four dismissals were asked for and in the three remaining non-partisan years a total of 14 dismissals were demanded. In fact there were 27 more dismissals from office in 1916 than in all the other eleven years from 1914 to 1925. The difference in appointments is not as great, but it is easily marked. There were 163 appointments made in 1916 and 136 in 1920, the first year of the partisan era. These two years are the peak years in their respective eras. The total number of appointments for the non-partisan and partisan periods are 579 for the former and 561 for the latter.[8]

In order to show the composition of the council by parties, and the appointments that each party was responsible for during the twelve years surveyed the following table is given.[9]

X=the year.
A and E=Democrats in Council.
C and G=Republicans in Council.
B and F—Appointments by Democrats.
D and H=Appointments by Republicans.

Non-Partisan Period					Partisan Period				
X	A	B	C	D	X	E	F	G	H
1914	2	52	3	73	1920	1	5	4	131
1915	2	27	3	77	1921	1	0	4	64
1916	3	149	2	14	1922	0	0	5	91

(Footnote continued)
for the purpose of finding out, among other things, the number of appointments that were made and dismissals that were caused during this period.

[8]Ibid., p. 6.

Just how many of the 127 appointments that were made in 1914, the first year in which the city operated under the new commission form of government, were due to the change in types of government the writer does not know. Neither can he say how many more men would have been removed from office after 1917 had no civil service law had been passed in that year. Both of these aspects of this problem merit closer study than the writer has been able to give them. Another fact that should be investigated is the party affiliation of the men that were appointed or dismissed during these periods, and the personal or party connection between the men so treated and the members of the council.

[9]Ibid., p. 11.

1917	3	56	2	18	1923	0	0	5	78
1918	3	56	2	48	1924	3	82	2	27
1919	3	48	2	29	1925	3	65	2	16
Total	16	388	14	259		8	152	22	407

A study of the above table reveals the existence of a relationship between the party in power and the number of appointments. In each case the party with a majority in power made the greater number of appointments, and this condition appears to exist as truly under one system as another.

We may now consider the dismissals from office in relation to the party composition of the council.[10]

X=the year.
A and E—Democrats in Council.
B and F—Dismissals by Democrats.
C and G=Republicans in Council.
D and H=Dismissals by Republicans.

Non-Partisan Period					Partisan Period				
X	A	B	C	D	X	E	F	G	H
1914	2	2	3	2	1920	1	0	4	1
1915	2	0	3	0	1921	1	0	4	10
1916	3	82	2	3	1922	0	0	5	4
1917	3	1	2	3	1923	0	0	5	1
1918	3	9	2	2	1924	3	18	2	0
1919	3	1	2	1	1925	3	8	2	1
Total	16	95	14	11		8	26	22	17

More striking than anything in the foregoing table is the fact that of the 103 dismissals made in the non-partisan period, 99 or 96% of them were made in the first three months of each year in which the newly elected officials took office, and in the partisan period only 17 of the 44 dismissals or 38% were made in this three month period. Mr. Haines also finds that 97% of all the dismissals made during the non-partisan period were made in the election year and in the partisan period 72.7% were made in the election year.[11] Another consideration that one must keep in mind when ex-

[10]Ibid, p. 19.
[11]Ibid., p. 19.

amining the tables on dismissals is the fact that 82.5% of all the dismissals that were made in the non-partisan period were made in the first three months of 1916. If this year's record were the same as that of the two preceding years the non-partisan period would have just about the same number of dismissals as the following period when party ballots were used. In attempting to find out why this year differed from the others, the writer has already cited parts of a pertinent interview and a news item from the "Reading Eagle"[12] The following information was volunteered on the reverse side of the questionnaire by one of the Democrats in office in 1916:

"During the period 1913-1919 I was defeated once for council and elected once. It was impossible to get a gathering at a non-partisan meeting. I attended the Democratic meetings only in my second term of running and was elected in my second term when we all tried to make a non-partisan affair of it . . . the Republicans combined and made a clean sweep carrying through with them a Democrat so that there should be a minority representation. The heads of the best departments, of course, were then Republicans, the minority getting the crumbs that fell from the table." [1913-15 period?]. "So at the next election the party I belonged to awoke to the situation and elected an entire change in the council and when I received my specified department I cleaned out every appointment which seemed to appease the general public as the majority of the people in my estimation believe 'to the victor belong the spoils!'"

It is not difficult to believe that this description corresponds with the facts of 1916.

More revealing than either our study of appointments or dismissals is a consideration of the votes cast by the members of council. To what extent are the votes on measures unanimous? Or in those cases in which there are divisions, are the divisions apt to be along party lines, or across them? In examining the more general question first we find that there were eleven instances of divided votes during the non-partisan period and 69 such instances in the partisan period. The writer realizes that a lack of unanimity may be the result of personal differences as well as partisan differences. Therefore, it is highly important to

[12]See pages 119, 193.

find out the number of times all the members of one party voted one way and the members of the other party voted the opposite way. There was one such instance in the non-partisan period and there were forty in the partisian period.[13] The contrast here is most striking and when we realize that only 9% of the divisions in the non-partisan era were cases of strict party alignment as compared with 57.9% of the instances of divided votes in the partisan era we can believe that according to this type of evidence there was more partisanship in the official partisan period.[14]

The question that one might well ask at this point is—which of the three types of evidence about partisanship is most significant? More men were removed from office, and more men were appointed to office in the non-partisan period than in the partisan period. On the basis of this material alone can we conclude that there was more partisanship in one period than in the other? The writer thinks that we cannot, for three reasons of varying importance. First, because such a high percentage of both appointments and dismissals occurred in one single year of the non-partisan period that it tended to place at a disadvantage any record in which all six years were examined. Therefore, one is likely to see the effect of 1916 rather than the tenor of the six years in which the non-partisan ballot was used. Secondly, 1913 was the last year that Reading was governed by a select and common council. The change in the form of government called for the appointment of an increased number of officials—how many the writer cannot say, but he believes that this change in type of government is a factor to be considered.

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[13]Ibid., p. 28.

[14]The years in which the cases of divided votes occurred and the composition of council in those years will be given in the following table:

1916 3 Democrats, 2 Republicans, 1 case of Party Division.
1920 1 Democrat, 4 Republicans, 9 cases of Party Division.
1921 1 Democrat, 4 Republicans, 1 case of Party Division.
1924 3 Democrats, 2 Republicans, 25 cases of Party Division.
1925 3 Democrats, 2 Republicans, 5 cases of Party Division.

Thirdly, the Civil Service law of 1917 inevitably tended to restrain, if not prevent, councilmen from removing men for partisan reasons. The writer cannot say how many office holders were saved from removal because of the civil service law, but its presence must be reckoned with.[15]

This data about divided votes seems to offer more conclusive proof regarding the existence of partisanship than anything that we have thus far examined in this Reading study. Other evidence has suggested the presence of partisanship in both the non-partisan and partisan periods. However, this record of party alignments seems to reveal a greater degree of partisanship in the partisan period.

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[15]However, one competent observer said that the civil service law made no difference at all.

VII

ISSUES UNDER THE NON-PARTISAN SYSTEM

The personality of candidates and organization support more largely determined the outcome of the municipal campaigns in Pennsylvania during the non-partisan period than impersonal issues. This is particularly true of the 1913 and 1915 contests; in 1917 a number of electorates saw the fight at the ballot box in their community, not as a local contest but as nothing less than an opportunity in which they could endorse the position taken by the United States in the war against Germany. The following section is an illustration of this idea.

1. READING AND THE WORLD WAR[1]

The most spectacular campaign the writer knows of in

[1]Not only in Reading, but in other cities of Pennsylvania did the war stand out as the issue in the 1917 campaigns. Certain newspapers carried no first page election news in that year, but everyone of the papers gave part of their front pages to war news. The people were thinking about the war and skill in guiding opinion was not lacking so that the election contest was often seen in terms of helping or ignoring the American army in France. Thus it is, that according to the editor of the "Herald," (Nov 7, 1917) the patriotic citizens of New Castle gave a smashing blow at disloyalty and pro-Germanism in their defeat of Walter Tyler, the Socialist candidate. "The 'Herald' extra at 10:15 o'clock last night, that announced the triumph of loyalty and the rebuke to the forces that would cripple the hands of the government in the energetic prosecution of the war to make the world safe for democracy, first carried the glad tidings to the public and it sold by the thousands." (Ibid.).

That the war spirit colored the political atmosphere in Williamsport can be seen by the merest glance at such martial editorial captions as "Municipal Election and Patriotism," ("Williamsport Gazette and Bulletin," Sept. 1, 1917); "Will Not Vote for Un-American Citizens," (Ibid., Sept. 11, 1917.) (This rap is at Socialist candidate for mayor.) "Must Fight for Peace," (another plea to defeat the Socialists.) (Ibid., Sept. 13, 1917.) Two days later there was an editorial on the importance of registering and voting for Americans. On primary election day a final effort was made to get the electorate to vote, and to vote for the safe and proper candidates. "Vote for the men who are true to the flag, true to themselves and their fellowmen, true to their home city." (Ibid., Sept. 19, 1917.)

Certain newspapers felt that the non-partisan ballot was valuable

which there was an issue, was staged in Reading in 1917. In this city the Republicans, the Democrats, and the Socialists are more or less equal in strength. In the September primary of 1917 four Socialists, two Democrats and two Republicans were nominated for council, four of whom were to be elected in the November election.

After the smoke of the primary battle had cleared away and the two old parties saw the imminent danger that threatened Reading in the form of the candidacy of the four Socialists, they held a series of separate and joint meetings. At one of the first meetings of the Republicans their league passed resolutions endorsing the four old party candidates in opposition to the four Socialists who were on the same ballot. The Democratic city executive committee had already taken similar action. About this time, Attorney Jas. R. Dickinson made the statement that Messers. McConnell, Ruth, Holl and Stauffer represented the American Party and American ideals in this election. Party lines were to be cast aside in this campaign and the contest was to be waged on national issues, "supporting the present administration in its war against Germany."[2]

A few days later this party that had been suggested by Mr. Dickinson was really formed for the coming council-manic campaign. The four old party candidates were to receive the full and united support of the Democratic and Republican parties under the banner of the American party. This fusion ticket made to defeat the four Socialists was unanimously adopted at a meeting of the leaders of the Democratic and Republican parties. This gathering

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(Footnote continued)
in causing Republicans or Democrats to go outside of their party in voting for capable candidates of the other party, but the great majority of newspaper men seemed to very clearly feel that there was no closed season on the Socialist and he was always to be defeated because of his party and without regard to his personal training, ability or honesty. The non-partisan ballot was not meant for him. In 1917 it helped Republicans and Democrats join hands and charge the Socialist with being disloyal and then crush him at the polls in the name of making the world safe for democracy.

[2]The "Reading Eagle," Sept. 29, 1917.

was an enthusiastic one and it was pervaded with a high spirit of patriotism. Speakers urged everyone to register and vote so that the American Party candidates would have such a majority that their opponents would be confounded and the boys at the front would know that, "the citizens of Reading stood back of them to the finish in the fight to save the world for democracy."[3]

A campaign committee composed of members of both the old parties was formed to conduct the fight. They declared that the fight would have a bearing on the war question, and that the issue was: "Patriotism and Efficiency." The committee established a headquarters in the central part of the city and held a number of meetings for the purpose of instructing the ward workers, and placing the two party organizations on a mutual working basis so that there would be no conflict of forces. Every voter was to vote for the four candidates regardless of party affiliation.

The preparations for the fight that the old parties were making and their high enthusiasm for the contest are well described in the footnote below.[4]

The American Party was actually launched, according to the "Eagle", in the shadow of the Stars and Stripes in Odd Fellows' Temple. There on October 19, 1917, about four

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[3]The "Reading Eagle," October 2, 1917.

[4]"Thousands of posters bearing the portraits of the four American Party candidates will be circulated. These posters are inscribed, 'American Party Candidates for City Council, We Stand for the Stars and Stripes, Patriotism and Efficiency. Shall it be Old Glory or the Red Flag? Answer by your vote on Election Day, Tuesday, November 6th.' In addition to these posters there will be small cards by the tens of thousands. A circular letter will be issued to the 18,000 registered voters of Reading setting forth the issues and calling upon them to support the American Party candidates at the coming election. The newspaper will be used extensively as advertising medium. These advertisements will be prepared by a specialist. As one of the leaders put it, 'It is a fight to the finish.'

"Chairman Ermentrout in addressing the committee said, 'We have found the rank and file of the Democratic and Republican parties anxious for the battle of Americanism against Socialism. This is not a fight on party lines. We are fighting to support the administration on the war question and for undivided loyalty to the American flag'." The "Reading Eagle, October 13, 1917.

hundred voters heard the platform of this hundred percent American party advocated. They heard shot after shot and great broadsides fired into the flank of the Socialist party. They heard ringing challenges presented to their opponents and they were told how the very principles of Socialism had utterly failed in the past. "It was the first meeting of the new party, and Democratic and Republican, Prohibitionist and Progressive, with like enthusiasm and ardor, applauded until the hall rang to the echo."[5]

The general committee of the American party concentrated the party's efforts on ward mass meetings that were held in all sections of the city during the remaining days of the campaign. These meetings were extensively advertised by placards and by press announcements and they were well attended. Heavy artillery oratory was delivered at these gatherings. The issue that usually captured the attention of everyone was, "Americanism versus Socialism." Patriotism and love of country was the keynote. The issue might at first have seemed unusual in a municipal campaign, but the Democratic and Republican leaders said it was necessary because of the opposition to the war and our government by the Socialists.

It is true that the Socialist Party denied the charge of not supporting the government at Washington and insisted as strongly as they were able that their loyalty was as absolute and as great as that of either of the old parties. The American party, however, never heard their opponents' reply, but continued the attack and said that if the Socialist candidates were elected there would be secret government at city hall with the actual municipal headquarters at the Labor Lyceum.

Two days before the election the "Eagle" observed that just as the Democrats and Republicans in Congress were able to forget their partisan differences and to heartily unite as Americans and patriots for the upholding of our country against her foes, so the Republicans and Democrats

[5]Ibid., October 20, 1917.

of Reading had put partisanship behind them and were ready to vote unitedly for the policies of the government at Washington. "All other questions have been sunk in the issue of the country's safety."[6] The next day the "Eagle" drew a most vivid picture of the issue in the municipal campaign as the majority of voters were taught to see it.

"Place your Patriotism above Party . . . If they can not place their patriotism above their partisanship then their patriotism lacks something very essential in these days when the sons of Americans, whatever their party, are standing shoulder to shoulder in the trenches of Europe and training camps of America, preparing to make a drive that will carry them to Berlin, there to hold the obsequies over the dead ambition of a mad ruler. Are these boys of yours and mine in the trenches asking each other, 'Are you a Democrat' or 'Are you a Republican?' Can you look your boy in the face when Johnny comes marching home and you try to explain to him that you did not realize you were helping to elect exponents of the Red flag when you refused to vote for anyone of four American candidates?"[7]

In this municipal election the city was campaigned as it had never been campaigned before. The two old parties held a half a dozen final meetings on the eve of the election and the Socialists held meetings in every ward and precinct.

On election day the Republican and Democratic parties voted as one unit and each one of their four councilmanic candidates received between 10,013 and 10,218 votes while the four Socialist candidates received from 4,548 to 4,928 votes.

The morning after the election the "Reading Times" came out with large headlines saying, "Americanism Sustained in Reading. Stauffer, Holl, McConnell, Ruth Win. Still an American City is Verdict for Nation."[8] James H. Maurer, President of the Pennsylvania Federation of Labor and a leader of the Socialist party in Reading, made a very enlightening comment on the election at which his party went down to defeat. Mr. Maurer's significant words are,

"It must be remembered that the fusion vote has the four daily pa-

[6]Ibid., November 4, 1917.
[7]Ibid., November 5, 1917.
[8]November 6, 1917.

papers of the city on its side;[9] the clergy that was not silent during the campaign was denouncing us every Sunday from the pulpit and during the week days in the press. Even the moving picture shows were made to do their part during the campaign, developing a psychology unfavorable to us. Money played its part, and above all, most untruthful, yes, libelous charges were made against us which with our limited means we were unable to answer. Our only means of reaching the people was to speak to them at the street corners and once a week with our weekly paper and a small leaflet. Considering these handicaps, it must be admitted we did remarkably well.

"We were accused of being pro-German, but now these same accusers admit that the Germans supported the fusion ticket . . . We would have won in a three cornered contest, and, if the two old parties insist on staying together, we will before long be strong enough to win in a two cornered contest."[10]

Mr. Maurer has well shown the obstacles that his party was forced to fight in the campaign. The Socialists printed some advertisments in the leading newspapers on "Socialism the Hope of the World"; they also published a weekly paper that had a limited circulation and they had such an efficient party organization in 1917 that according to their leading candidate, they could circularize Reading in seventeen minutes. However, in spite of these advantages, they did not have anything like an adequate opportunity to reply to the charges made against them. All the papers, save the one Socialist weekly, gave considerable news and editorial space for presenting attacks against and criticisms of the Socialist, but these same newspapers gave little or no space

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[9]In addition to news items and editorials the "Reading Times" contained a number of cartoons that definitely favored the Democratic and Republican parties. One cartoon showed Father Reading holding two flags, one the Stars and Stripes and the other the Red flag, and asking: "Which one shall it be, boys?" (November 2, 1917) The next day the "Times" carried a cartoon that pictured Uncle Sam holding a ballot with American party candidates upon it and saying, "These are my candidates." The leading Socialist candidate was a man named J. Henry Stump and one colorful cartoon pictured Mr. Stump as the stump of a tree with one arm as the branch of a tree burning up. In the flames and smoke of the fire was the word "Revolution." The cartoon was captioned: "Is this what we want in Reading?" (November 5, 1917). The fact that Mr. Stump was generally held to be absolutely honest and a man of genuine ability evidently meant nothing to the "Times" since he was a candidate of the Socialist party.

[10]The "Reading Eagle," November 7, 1917.

for presenting the Socialist answer to the statements made by the Democratic and Republican leaders. Many voters heard the Socialists and their aims questioned, but few heard the answer of the defense, and besides when one's country is at war one can not take any chances with Socialists. The voters were led to associate the two major parties with the Stars and Stripes and the Socialist party with the idea of red revolution.

The history of the operation of the non-partisan ballot in Pennsylvania would have been quite different if the majority of newspapers had as strongly and as persistently urged voters to lay partisanship aside in the several municipal campaigns as the Reading newspapers urged the voters in the election of 1917 to vote for all the old party candidates regardless of whether they were Democrats or Republicans. Socialism was the common enemy![11]

2. CITY MANAGER ISSUE IN ALTOONA

Altoona is another city in which there was a clear-cut issue in a local campaign. In 1917 the question in Altoona

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[11]The "Eagle" for November 13, 1917, contains the following statement about the receipts and expenditures of the American Party for this campaign:

"The receipts amounted to $4,248.50 and the expenditures were $4,102.52, leaving a balance of $145.98. The Councilmanic Candidates —Stauffer, Ruth, McConnell and Holl each gave $150. The largest contributor was Mayor Filbert. He gave $185. There were 171 contributors, including many Democratic and Republican leaders as well as citizens independent in politics. The expenditures were for clerical hire, advertising, rent of halls, music and messenger service."

After reading the foregoing description of the 1917 campaign in Reading, the leading Socialist candidate made the following comment: "I have read your paper with considerable interest. The thing that strikes me as being most remarkable about the write-up is its correctness. I cannot find a single thing that is overdrawn or incorrect, insofar as my memory serves me. Insofar as the campaign of 1917, in Reading, is concerned, I cannot see that there is anything more to be said about it. . . . " (Letter from James H. Maurer, March 4, 1926.)

One of the successful candidates, an independent Republican wrote: "I read your paper with interest, and I think it fairly describes the feeling prevailing at the time . . . my recollection of our citizens' opposition to Socialist candidates was based on our aversion to Socialist doctrines generally, and especially against the Socialist party's opposition to conscription." (Letter from B. Frank Ruth, March 4, 1926.)

was whether or not this municipality should have the city manager form of government. At a town meeting, which had been called to consider methods for strengthening the city government, a committee of public spirited citizens decided to ask the voters to nominate and elect four councilmen who favored the appointment of a city manager. The town meeting then endorsed Westfall, Stevens, Cassidy, and Lafferty for nomination. These candidates pledged themselves to accept only $500 of their $2,500 salary and to use the extra $2,000 in order to secure the services of an expert city manager.

The "Altoona Tribune" was unqualifiedly in favor of both the city manager form of government and the four candidates pledged to support it. By means of editorials and news items it persistently and eloquently favored them both throughout the primary and election campaign.[12] These four candidates also had the support of the "Altoona Mirror," the chamber of commerce, the Lions and Kiwanis clubs, "banking groups and big business generally."[13] They were opposed, according to a statement made by one of the successful candidates and also by an independent observer, by "cheap politicians."

The "Tribune" said that there was a feeling among many people in Altoona that the then existing regime was so bad that the city manager plan was certain to be an improve-

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[12]These city manager candidates inserted many advertisements in the "Tribune." Their general tenor may be seen by reading the following advertisement which was in the Altoona "Tribune" for September 18th, 1917.

"Voters of Altoona!

"Men of all parties!

"We're putting this squarely up to you. Don't let anyone cloud the issue.

"Do you want the city's business run for the interest of all the citizens, run to bring you the greatest return for your taxes, run by men who will treat you courteously as fellow citizens when you have business with your council, run by men who will ask the present council to set our salary at $500 a year and have the other $2,000 stay in the city treasury to pay the manager and for any other use that is needed?

"If you want this and an honest, efficient, economical government, vote for Cassidy Lafferty Westfall Stevens."

[13]Letter to the writer from defeated candidate.

ment upon it. This was one reason why they were for it. Another reason was the clean-cut sort of campaign waged by the candidates favoring this form of government.

By the day of the primary the contest had narrowed down to two groups: Those who favored and those who opposed city managership. The councilmanic fight was the center of political interest at the primary, even tho a prothonotary, a sheriff and a county auditor were nominated by both the Republicans and the Democrats. The city managership issue carried.

After the primary the "Tribune" again pointed out the supreme test that the voters would be put to on election day. The campaign was one of principle solely, and the personality of the candidates was not an issue. Even more definite than was the case in the primary, the contest was waged between those who wanted to continue the old type of commission government and those who wanted to introduce a method that had been tried in many American cities with most gratifying success. The issue was clearly presented. The candidates who favored the city manager plan were not office-seekers, but four reputable men who had yielded to the call of duty and agreed to serve the city for one fifth of the regular salary provided by law. These men were successful business men, noted for their public spirit and their executive ability and common sense. "Their vote should be practically unanimous."[14]

At another time the "Tribune" published an editorial on the contractors in Altoona. It said that the same conditions existed there that had long persisted in the city of Philadelphia. The time had arrived when the voters were to deliver themselves from the burden of contractor rule. This was to be done by voting for Cassidy, Lafferty, Westfall, and Stevens "who will serve the broader interests of all the people."

This was also a campaign without partisan feeling. The non-partisan principle worked on this occasion; here was a

[14]"The Altoona Tribune," October 3, 1917.

definite issue, not hid by partisanship, that separated the voters into two groups. There was a citizens' committee of 58 formed that waged the contest on this local issue which was then uppermost in the minds of those thinking about the coming election. More than once the "Tribune" declared that the city manager candidates were in no sense aspirants for place. Three of the four opposing candidates, however, were then members of the city council and the fourth had served in a former council. One of the main arguments used against the city manager plan was the charge that it was a long step toward the inauguration of autocracy and the destruction of democracy. Those in favor of this type of government answered this attack by saying that it was made because certain interested groups were afraid that the new type of administration would reduce their illicit profits. They also knew that the city manager was likely to introduce increased efficiency and impartiality into the administration of government. Voters interested in the common good were bound to be for the city manager candidates.

Efforts were made just before the campaign to inject the liquor question into it. On November fifth the "Tribune" carried a front page article under the caption, "Prohibition Not the Issue." Placards had been posted at the drinking clubs saying that the city manager council, if elected, would annul all licenses. Since the council would not have this power under the Clark Act, prohibition could not possibly be an issue of this campaign. Another attempt to befog the issue was made by a group of men who distributed a "patriotic" circular under the title, "Follow the Flag." Their purpose was to prejudice members of certain patriotic societies against the city manager candidates on the alleged ground that they were under Catholic or Jewish influence and would be certain to select a Roman Catholic city manager who would straightway chop off the official heads of all Protestant office-holders at city hall. "This brutal document has proved a veritable boomerang and has made many votes for Westfall, Cassidy, Stevens, and Lafferty among

the patriotic societies and others not identified with them."[15]

The city manager candidates won decisively at the election by votes ranging from 4,001 to 4,211. Their nearest opponent received 2,711.[16]

In order to find out what bearing the non-partisan ballot had upon the results of the 1917 election, the writer sent letters, in which he asked this question, to each of the eight candidates. Two replies were received. One of the successful candidates said that the non-partisan ballot helped the voters at that election to choose candidates with "personality and high standing in the community."[17] The other reply was from one of the four defeated candidates:

"I certainly think that the non-partisan ballot assisted greatly to the success of C. M. Regime, while of course I would have been beaten on a party ballot (being a Socialist.) There were two of the other commissioners who were Republicans that could not have been beaten on a party ballot."[18]

This statement of opinion is especially interesting in view of the fact that it was expressed by one who was elected to the city commission in 1913 and again in 1915 and then went down in defeat in 1917 as an opponent of the city manager plan.

Partisanship was not injected into the 1917 fight. Whether that was the result of the personalities of the candidates, the clearly drawn issue in the campaign or the non-partisan ballot is an open question. However, the writer thinks that the non-partisan ballot was one of the factors that helped eliminate partisan politics from this contest.

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[15]The "Altoona Tribune," November 6, 1917.
[16]The "Altoona Tribune," November 9, 1917.
[17]Letter to the writer, March, 1926.
[18]Letter to the writer, April, 1926.

VIII.

METHODS OF GUIDING PUBLIC OPINION IN THE FIRST NON-PARTISAN PRIMARY AND ELECTION CAMPAIGNS.[1]

At the first primary in which the non-partisan ballot was used there was a maximum number of candidates in the majority of cities of the third class. This was in part the result of a marked tendency among many members of the old select and common council to strive for nomination on the new commission. Their wards had elected them members of the old bi-cameral council; now they were going to ask their city to elect them to the new council. Then, too, the position of city councilmen had a significance that it did not formerly have. There was but one chamber and it was small in size, and the councilmen were now paid a salary; therefore, certain new men ran for council who had never offered themselves for city office before. This was a primary in which one might secure nomination regardless of his party standing, and this non-partisan feature of the campaign attracted many candidates who would not otherwise have sought office. The fact that it was a new system being tried for the first time also added to the number of candidates.

In order to meet the problem of informing the voters regarding the merits of the various candidates, different plans were tried in the different cities. There was a general feeling that in a field of fifty or more primary candidates some central body would have to do some selecting or the vote would be so scattered that the eight successful councilmanic candidates might have a small fraction of the electorate behind them and not be the men who could best

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[1]This brief study of methods followed in given primaries and elections for centering public opinion on desirable candidates does not pretend to be exhaustive. However, the writer believes that it is representative of the various methods followed by non-party organizations, and it contains descriptions of the most important types of support that the writer knows of.

represent the city. The following plans were among those followed:

Wilkes Barre

In Wilkes Barre's first primary campaign under the new commission government act, fifty-three candidates ran for council. Before the primaries a committee of one hundred citizens was formed in this city in order to mold public sentiment so that trustworthy and competent candidates would be nominated. When the committee announced its intention to endorse certain candidates, much opposition was manifested. However, the committee went ahead with its plan. At a meeting attended by a minority of the committee of one hundred, the executive committee gave a report recommending fifteen out of fifty-three candidates for endorsement. This action was approved by a vote of twenty-five members of the general committees. The voters now had the problem of picking eight candidates from this endorsed group of fifteen. The plan was more severely criticised now than before; much of the opposition came from that portion of the fifty-three candidates that had not been placed within the chosen circle of fifteen. Two of the eight men nominated at the primaries were not among the number endorsed by the committee. "A vigorous campaign was waged for the general election, but the contest was carried out on strictly non-partisan lines."[2] All four men finally elected were among those originally endorsed by the committee of one hundred.

York

There were forty-six candidates contending for nomination to council in York in 1913. There town meetings were held in order to create an enlightened public opinion regarding the main issues of the campaign. On the evening of September fourth there was a meeting in the court house attended by over three hundred citizens. The gathering was free from partisanship and those present were primarily interested in discussing current municipal issues. The vot-

[2]Wilkes Barre "Record Almanac," 1914, p. 44.

ers considered the proposed commission form of government, the non-partisan ballot, and the qualifications that they deemed necessary in candidates for the new council.

This free exchange of opinions on these central questions resulted in the formulation of a municipal platform. The meeting then decided to send a printed copy of this platform to every candidate. The candidate was to be given five days in which to state his position on each of the planks of the platform.[3]

The second town meeting was held September eleventh and there were about five hundred voters present. Thirty-six of the forty-six candidates for city council submitted replies regarding their attitude on the recently drafted town meeting platform. Some of the candidates accepted it in full; others accepted certain provisions and criticized less satisfactory ones, while still others rejected the entire platform or refused to file an answer regarding their attitude on it. All of the replies were in writing and were either read by the secretary of the town meeting or by the candidates themselves.

There was considerable discussion regarding the question of selecting eight candidates for special endorsement. There was such vigorous opposition to an endorsement plan that it was given up. The most that was done in that direction was to pass a resolution authorizing Dr. E. W. Meisenhelder, Sr., as chairman, to appoint a publicity committee of five to publish in the local press before the primary election, advertisements presenting the attitude of candidates for city council and information regarding their experience in public affairs. A citizens' committee of forty members was also named.[4]

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[3]The "York Dispatch" for September 5, 1913, published an editorial in which it praised the motives of those who called the town meeting into being, but it was skeptical of the positive results that it would achieve.

[4]The "York Dispatch" for September 12, 1913, contained this announcement: "Notice to Voters! In accordance with a resolution adopted by the Town Meeting, September 11th, the attitude of candidates for city council together with their past relationship with public affairs will be made public in issues of this paper between now

On September fifteenth there was a quarter of a page advertisement in the "Dispatch" giving the names of seventeen candidates who unqualifiedly endorsed the town meeting platform and the eight candidates who favored it in part. This information was under the caption: "York First. Forget all Partisanship and Vote for Men, Not Parties."

Erie

There were fifty-three candidates for city council in Erie in 1913. The newspapers, the chamber of commerce, a newly organized voters league, and town meetings were all active in awakening the interest of the voter and in informing him regarding the merits and weaknesses of the candidates and the importance of the campaign.

As early as August sixth the "Erie Dispatch" told its readers about the coming municipal primary and election at which councilmen would be elected under the new commission form of government. It asked the people in Erie to consider the men best qualified for the position. It then gave them an opportunity to present the names of citizens who could most adequately fill the position. The readers were asked to suggest candidates by filling out a coupon printed with the announcement and sending it to the editor of the "Dispatch." This ballot coupon was printed daily until the primary election on September 16th. Each coupon voted gave the name of the candidate it supported and the number of the ward in which the voter lived.

About a month later the "Dispatch" said that the citizens were showing a great interest in its ballot for councilmen and that hundreds of votes were being received. It was furthermore the opinion of the newspaper that many candidates had announced themselves for the official primary as the result of having been named by the readers of the "Dispatch." It then listed the names of the twenty highest candidates. Their votes ranged from 1,571 down to 110.[5]

(Footnote continued)
and the primary election, September 16th.
E. W. Meisenhelder, Chairman.
M. S. Niles, Secretary."

[5]The "Erie Dispatch," September 9, 1913.

The "Dispatch" addressed an open letter to each of the fifty-three candidates for council. Since only a few of the candidates had announced any definite platform or given the voters any idea of what might be expected of them should they be elected, and as the newspaper believed that the public was entitled to know something about the merits of the men, who were seeking this important position, the "Dispatch" addressed the following questions to the candidates:

"First: Why do you seek the office of councilman, and on what grounds do you ask the support of the voters of Erie?

"Second: What is your platform, and if elected what will be your policy in the conduct of municipal affairs?"[6]

The candidates were asked to eliminate reference to other candidates and party politics and to limit their answers to five hundred words. The replies were to be published in the order in which they were received. This idea, according to the "Dispatch", met with considerable commendation.[7] Both voters and a number of candidates heartily endorsed this method of placing the current campaign on something of a concrete basis. Before this time the most that a voter could find out about a candidate was that he was favored or opposed by one of several combinations. Now the voter ought to be able to disregard combinations and center his full attention on the man and what he would do when he got into office.

During the next few days a number of candidates answered the two questions put to them, but their answers contributed but little to the enlightenment of the voter. One candidate, Mr. Callaghan, said that he could give his whole time to the office and that he did not have any connections with any interest which might bias his judgment. His belief in his ability to do the work honestly, faithfully and efficiently were the supreme reasons why the voters of Erie

[6]"Erie Dispatch," September 9, 1913.

[7]All but eleven of the fifty-three primary candidates sent some sort of a platform to the Dispatch in response to its open letter. None of these eleven candidates were nominated at the primary, but whether there was any connection between replying to the open letter and nomination is problematical.

should elect him. Mr. V. D. Eichenlaub briefly stated his position saying that he planned his platform along business lines and that, if elected, he would treat everyone, regardless of their party or previous connections with fairness and impartiality. The other replies were similar in tone and content to these two. "Looking over the answers," the "Dispatch" said, "it becomes apparent that there is not in this campaign one dominant issue.. There is no burning question of municipal government just now agitating the public mind and dividing the community into hostile camps."[8] The same thing doubtless may be said about the great majority of municipal primaries and elections in Pennsylvania in 1913 and in later years.

On the eve of the primary election there were four slates in the field. (1) A newly organized voters league supported a group of four candidates.[9] (2) and (3) The Socialist party and the Central Labor Union each had a slate and there was little friction between them. (4) The personal workers league, an organization that was formed following the "Billy" Sunday revival meetings, sent out postal cards bearing the names of four candidates that it endorsed.[10]

At the primary the voters league won two of the eight nominations, the Central Labor Union won two, the Socialist party won three, and a candidate named Dundon was nominated although he was not on any of the previously mentioned slates.[11]

The day before the election of councilmen the "Dispatch"

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[8]The "Erie Dispatch," September 13, 1913.

[9]The "Dispatch" said that unfortunately an inner committee of the Voters League had picked the candidates that the League was to support without asking the opinion of its members. September 14, 1913.

[10]The "Dispatch," September 13, 1913.

[11]The outcome of the primary caused the following resolution to be adopted by the chamber of commerce directors: "Resolved, that the chamber of commerce, thru its board of directors, is in favor of an organized and vigorous campaign of education with reference to the provisions of the Clark Bill as it relates to the coming election; that the matter was referred to the chamber of commerce, who shall, after a conference with other organizations of the city, if they so desire, report back to this body within a week some plan of action." The "Dispatch," October 2, 1913.

defined the struggle as a fight of the working men against the manufacturers, "with the Socialist the third angle and trying to down the other two.[12]

At the election the labor unions elected two of their candidates to council. All elements of the city were represented and each of the men chosen had an excellent record. The "Dispatch" said that all the councilmen deserved the support of all the citizens of Erie. It then urged the representatives of labor "to exert themselves not merely for the part of the citizenship of this city, but for all of them—for the sake of Erie's own welfare as well as for the good of the cause of labor itself.[13]

Williamsport

In 1913 no newspaper that the writer has examined did more to inform the electorate regarding the purpose of the new commission government act and the merits of certain candidates for city council and the importance of choosing them, than the "Gazette and Bulletin" of Williamsport. In certain other cities taxpayers leagues, voters leagues, or committees of one hundred had been formed for the purpose of aiding the voters in the selection of those best qualified to serve as city councilmen under the Clark Act. Also in previous primaries and elections party names had guided the voter in casting his ballot. In the absence of these agencies that often help the voter in forming an opinion concerning the fitness or lack of fitness of the candidates for the office of city council, and because of the multiplicity of candidates for this office, the "Gazette and Bulletin" firmly believed that it was both its duty and its privilege to definitely instruct the voter in his voting for candidates. This newspaper considered the claims of the various candidates solely from the standpoint of one vitally interested in the welfare of Williamsport. After consideration of the candidates it selected eight men, any four of whom it believed best able to take charge of the city's affairs. From the latter part

[12]The "Dispatch," November 5, 1913.
[13]The "Dispatch," November 5, 1913.

of August until the final voting in November these eight candidates were repeatedly endorsed in both editorials and news items in the "Gazette and Bulletin"; many of the editorials were front page editorials. In this series of editorials there was nothing said against any candidates in particular—all was said in favor of the chosen ones. The words Democrat and Republican were not used and partisan politics were rarely mentioned. As far as this one newspaper was concerned a positive and constructive campaign in favor of eight men was waged. Beginning with August 30th and ending with the final voting in November, each day a biographical sketch of one or more of the selected candidates, or an editorial regarding these candidates and the new commission form of government, or both, appeared in the newspaper. The "Gazette and Bulletin" said that it was not easy to give this favored treatment to eight of the fifty-three candidates and not to any of the others, but in order to perform the service that it owed the people of Williamsport, it would be guided solely by the common good and clearly point out the eight candidates that were best qualified to serve the city. An election invariably creates an embarrassing situation for both a newspaper and the voters generally. Both have friends among the candidates that they would like to support, but only eight can be selected—"and your final selection must be made as we have made ours, from the standpoint of general, all around ability and the probability of good intelligent service."[14]

In the latter part of August the "Gazette and Bulletin" printed general editorial pleas for business men to become candidates for city council. These editorials pointed out the fact that Williamsport then needed big men in her city government as she had never needed them before. It was on August 30th, however, that the actual campaign for the nomination of certain men to city council began. On that day an editorial that both described the change that was about to take place in the city government and definitely

[14]The "Williamsport Gazette and Bulletin," September 2, 1913.

urged the voters to nominate John B. Emery for city council, appeared in the "Gazette and Bulletin."[15] On September first the "Gazette and Bulletin" added to the name of John B. Emery, that of L. M. Castner as one of the candidates that it believed should be included in the list of those, who by their ability and experience had shown themselves capable of assuming satisfactorily the duties of city councilmen. Mr. Castner's past experience was extolled. He was at that time the presiding officer of the select council. The next day the name of Robert J. White was added to the list of especially selected candidates. For five years Mr. White had been a member of the common council. On September 3rd an editorial appeared endorsing John W. Villinger for city council because he had achieved success as a business man right in Williamsport and entirely by his own efforts. If elected he would doubtless use the same principles and methods in the management of the affairs of the municipality that he had used in achieving his personal success. The city needed men of Mr. Villinger's kind of experience. He had never held public office.[16] In considering the claims of the various candidates, the "Gazette and Bulletin" investigated, with others, those of J. Al Minor and it was of

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[15]"A new era in the government of Williamsport is soon to be inaugurated. The Clark Commission Government Bill, passed by the last legislature and approved by the governor, makes it possible for our citizens to enjoy, under the approaching new order of things, a greatly improved and more efficient government than they have had under the present form. The affairs of the city will be taken out of the hands of the 39 councilmen now in power and will be placed in the hands of four commissioners. . . . The first step the voters have to take is to nominate eight commission candidates. . . . These eight shall be chosen from the 53 aspirants who have filed nomination papers and whose names have already appeared in the local newspapers. . . . The "Gazette and Bulletin" believes that of the entire 53 candidates for the nomination the majority of them are men of integrity and enjoying possession of many admirable qualities. John B. Emery stands at the head of those best fitted to give Williamsport the kind of government it needs and which this paper believes the majority of the people mean it shall have."

[16]On this same day the "Tribune" in Altoona urged the voters there to nominate men with real executive ability for city council. The editorial went on to say that names would not be mentioned for, ". . . that would arouse the antipathy of the voters" but principles would be discussed.

the opinion that because of his business experience and technical knowledge he was especially well fitted for the office of city councilman. Mr. Minor had never been in politics. The voters were urged to nominate him.[17] The editorial on September 5th said that because that newspaper viewed city management as a strictly business proposition it believed that men of executive ability and business foresight should be chosen for city council. To the names of the five men already given to the voters, that of H. M. Foresman was added. Mr. Foresman was then a member of common council. The next day the "Gazette and Bulletin" selected their seventh candidate for endorsement by saying:

"If the voters generally approach the election in a broad spirit of altruism, having in mind only the interest of all the people, and not merely their own, or the interest of one locality, or perhaps a certain few people, they will take into serious consideration the claims of Wm. S. Millener, manager of the Millener Drug Company."[18]

On the 8th of September the eighth man was chosen. He was Truman P. Reitmeyer and because of his past experience he would be able to give to Williamsport most efficient and satisfactory government under commission rule.

During the remaining days of the primary campaign front page editorials appeared urging the voters to nominate the eight candidates for city council whose names appeared at the beginning of the editorial. The voters were told that there was grave danger in a primary election in which there were fifty-three candidates in the field. The names of definite men were recommended in order to prevent a dangerous scattering of the total vote. In another editorial the voters were told that commission government was not on trial, for it had already made good in over two hundred cities of the United States. Its success was measured in each instance by the calibre and capability of the men making up the commission. The people, however, were on trial and they could best serve themselves by safely voting for

[17]The "Gazette and Bulletin," September 4, 1913.

[18]September 6, 1913.

four of the eight men listed above.[19] At another time, in presenting this group of candidates to the voters, the "Gazette and Bulletin" said that it had been loyal to a principle in making its selection. It had considered the capability, fitness and general intelligence and had entirely disregarded their party and politics and their views on public questions. It asked the voters to follow this same principle of loyalty.[20] On the day of the primary election[21] this newspaper said that Williamsport had reached a division of the ways. The future of the city rested upon the ability of the 5,531 registered voters to judge fifty-three men and select four preeminently qualified for service as city commissioners. The names of the eight endorsed candidates were listed at the beginning of this editorial.[22]

Four of the eight candidates definitely supported by the "Gazette and Bulletin" were nominated at the primary.[23] The nomination of these four men pleased this newspaper for it convinced them that a very considerable number of the citizens approved of the course it had taken in definitely supporting eight men for the office of city councilmen. The problem of choosing the right men remained. Altho forty-five of the candidates had been eliminated and the attention of the voter was now centered upon the eight successful primary candidates, there was no change in the issue. The kind of government that Williamsport would have under commission rule would depend entirely upon the character and ability of the men elected to the office of city commissioner. The important duties of these officials were given again,[24]

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[19]September 13, 1913.

[20]September 15, 1913.

[21]This headline suggests the tenor of the campaign waged by the "Gazette and Bulletin," "If you had a $5,000,000 business which of the City Commissioner candidates would you hire to run it? Your vote today is the answer.'" It was in this newspaper on primary election day.

[22] September 16, 1913.

[23]Seven of these eight candidates placed in the following order at the primary—Emery 1st, Castner 3rd, Minor 7th, White 8th, Reitmeyer 10th, Millener 13th, Villinger 16th.

[24]"The city assessors recently made a report placing the present valuation of the city at nearly fifteen and a half million dollars—$15,-

and once more the voters were urged to support the four primary nominees that the "Gazette and Bulletin" had consistently endorsed from the very beginning of the campaign.

Front page editorials regarding the importance of commission government and the wisdom of electing the four endorsed candidates continued to daily appear in the "Gazette and Bulletin" until a few days before the election. A few days before the election this paper said, "one gratifying indication is that very little, if any, account is being taken of the politics of the candidates."[25] The day before the election the "Gazette and Bulletin" carried a large headline across its front page, "This is Your City's Crisis—Work Today and Vote Tomorrow for the Candidates of Known Efficiency—Minor, White, Emery and Castner."[26] On the day of the election the front page of the "Gazette and Bulletin" was almost entirely given to the support of the four favored candidates. The voter was clearly told once more that Williamsport's future progress depended upon his action that day and a vote for Emery, Minor, White and Castner was "a vote for Economy, Progress and Efficiency."[27]

At the election Minor stood fourth, Castner fifth, Emery seventh and White eighth. Therefore only one of the "Gazette and Bulletin" supported candidates was successful. Three failed to secure election altho they had had the unqual-

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(Footnote continued)
371,330.00 to be exact. The four men elected on November fourth will, with Mayor Stabler, have charge of all this property. They will hold in their hands the destiny of the city and the health, comfort, and happiness, to a great extent of the people. They will constitute the governing board of the city, discharging all of its responsibilities. They will collect and expend a quarter of a million dollars annually. They will decide what the tax rate shall be. They will choose the heads of the various municipal departments, all of the policemen, firemen, street employees, members of the board of health and other salaried and non-salaried employees with the exception of the controller. They will legislate for the city. They will let all contracts, all authority, all responsibility will rest in the hands of five men." October 14, 1913.

[25]October 27, 1913.

[26]November 3, 1913.

[27]November 4, 1913.

ified support of a daily newspaper[28] thruout the entire primary and election campaign. One might say that they had a daily newspaper very largely dedicated to them and the new commission form of government. In any event in the opinion of the writer more news and editorial space was given to this subject than to any other single subject during this period.

On the day following the election the "Gazette and Bulletin" contained an editorial on the passing of the old government and the beginning of the new. It gave the new commissioners its good wishes for a successful administration.[29] The next day it said it would support the new commissioners when they merited support and criticise them when they made mistakes. It added:

"The 'Gazette and Bulletin' still believes that the candidates of its choice by reason of their opportunities, business training and previous public service are better equipped for the task of establishing commission government in Williamsport on a good economical business basis than are those whom the majority have decided shall have charge of the city government under the new order of things during the next two years."[30]

At the next municipal primary and election the "Gazette and Bulletin" urged the voters to elect capable candidates but it did not present the names of a definite group of men for the electorate to choose. Altho the 1913 policy had been criticised, the "Gazette and Bulletin" still thought that helping the voters select the best candidates as it had done two years ago, was a newspaper's prerogative and its duty.'[31]

Conclusions

The foregoing material is a record of the effort made by some of the larger cities of the third class to inform the public, and guide public opinion in the matter of the election of its first commissioners. It reveals significantly the methods used, and the problems confronting these munici-

[28]The average daily circulation of the "Gazette and Bulletin" in October, 1913, was 10,743.
[29]November 5, 1913.
[30]November 6, 1913.
[31]September 8th, 1915.

palities.

The larger a community becomes, the more urgent and constant need is there for an organization or league, or powerful newspaper, or committee of some sort to select and endorse capable candidates for city office. This need was felt and definitely met in a number of these cities in 1913, and as we have said we have here cited some of the outstanding cases in which various types of support were given. The tangible result of this support was often disappointing to those who were most deeply interested in the outcome of the campaigns; and in face of partial defeat and an inability to arouse sentiment in succeeding municipal campaigns as it was first aroused in 1913, and in the absence of the concrete fruits of office that hearten members of permanent party organizations, these emergency agencies proved short-lived. And yet to successfully conduct municipal campaigns in the absence of national political organizations, some committee or league must continually do three things that political parties usually do for the electorate: make a concerted effort to select candidates, inform the voters about candidates and issues, and urge them to come to the polls. This want may not be felt in Corry or Meadville, but in Erie, Wilkes Barre, Williamsport or any of the larger communities it will be felt and satisfied. This will require an organization, and, as Lowell has said:

"Since an organization, and a group consciousness exist ready made in the National political parties, it is not unusual that men should make use of them, particularly as it gives the persons in charge of the party machinery an opportunity to keep it in working order, and reward the active partisans by a liberal use of the city patronage. If the largest American cities were independent states, and the choice of the mayor were made by popular vote there would be parties making the nominations and conducting the elections, but they would be strictly local parties, divided on the policy to be pursued by the city, not, as at present, based mainly on issues framed for the nation or the state."[32]

It follows from this adequate statement, as well as from an appreciation of the facts involved, that cities of any size

[32]Lowell: "Public Opinion in War and Peace," pp. 174-175.

find organizations indispensable. The advocates of the non-partisan ballot object to national party organizations because they are organized for national purposes and, without regard for local issues, and they tend to blind the voter to the problems that confront him in his own community. Reviving new committees with new issues seems contrary to the political nature of man, and seems to be tactically unsound when one considers the competition that must be met in the organizations of the Republican, or Democratic parties, which often have committeemen in the field 365 days out of the year. What is really needed, then, is an organization as robust and effective as are the local branches of the national parties, and one that has the community rather than the party interest foremost in mind, and is in no way pledged to issues or names or labels that have no bearing on the municipal problems of a given city.[33]

[33]The writer does not know nor does he expect to learn of any organization of this sort.

IX

CONCLUSIONS

An attempt has been made in the preceding chapters to show how the non-partisan ballot actually worked when it was in use in cities of the third class in Pennsylvania in the primaries and elections of 1913, 1915 and 1917. One might now take a comprehensive view of the field that has been surveyed in order to reveal the attitudes, ideas, and tactics or methods of many of those men who were active in local politics during the whole or part of the six years in which the non-partisan system was in use and the six years following in which party ballots were employed. The writer has gone to the politician and the newspapers for the facts. The scene of action has always been some one of the 28 cities of the third class in Pennsylvania.

It is important to remember that this is a Pennsylvania study, and that the non-partisan system here described was tried out under Pennsylvania conditions and not under those that might exist in Wisconsin or Nebraska, or some other place where party organizations are not so expertly manned, and where the electorate is less amenable to party influences. Dr. Merriam once said that sometimes a nomination by the ring is likely to mean a ring around the candidate's neck at election time. He was not referring to the Keystone state when he made this comment, for here the support of the ring invariably leads to election by the people. Pennsylvania has left the Republican column in presidential elections only once since the election of Abraham Lincoln. That was in the progressive uprising of 1912 when Roosevelt won the electoral votes of this state and Roosevelt was a Republican. Governor Pattison was the last Democrat to sit in the governor's chair at Harrisburg. He was elected in 1890. It is true that some citizens vote the Republican ticket in state or national elections nine times out of nine and vote for the man, and not the party in municipal elections, and this number is growing. However, the proportion

of people that are free to disregard party labels is probably smaller here than it is in most of the other states outside of the solid south.[1] The proportion varies in the different cities in Pennsylvania; neither are the cities in this group as certain as the entire state to be found in any one party column at different presidential and gubernatorial elections. Chester will not yield to Philadelphia in a singleness of devotion to the Republican party in either national, state or local contests. Oil City, New Castle, Monongahela, Meadville, McKeesport, Lock Haven, Lebanon, Johnstown, Hazleton, Harrisburg, Altoona, and Franklin are invariably as partisan Republican in all but local contests as Chester. Allentown, Bradford, Carbondale, Corry, Easton, Pittston, Reading, Titusville, Wilkes Barre, Williamsport and York vote for Democratic presidents and governors as well as for those who stand under the Republican flag.[2] However, with the exception of Pittston, Reading, Allentown, Corry and Williamsport, these doubtful cities are far more likely to be Republican than Democratic in gubernatorial elections and these last named cities, with the exception of Pittston, may usually be counted upon to vote for Republican presidents. Party lines are less closely drawn in this second group of cities that begins with Allentown and ends with York. Nevertheless thriving party organizations and the spirit of partisanship exist in Pittston, Reading, Wilkes Barre, Williamsport and York, as well as in other cities of the first group. These facts are briefly mentioned so that sight will not be lost of the partisan background against which the non-partisan ballot was tried. How the ballot would have worked under less adverse conditions is of no concern to the writer. Obviously, however, it must follow

[1]The following partisan influences must not be overlooked: The non-partisan ballot was used in an election in which both non-partisan and partisan officials were chosen. The likelihood of campaigns that were waged for different officials, yet in the same community and on the same day being kept in water tight compartments is evident enough to everyone. If the partisan and non-partisan elections had been held in different years the problem of eliminating partisanship from a municipal contest would doubtless have been more simple.

[2]See appendix, pages 250-251.

that the more critical people are of political parties the more readily will they pass by inferior candidates of any given party and support the candidates of an opposing party or those who are not associated with any party.

Another condition that was part of the Pennsylvania situation was the difference between the Zeitgeist of the periods in which the ballot was first adopted and then abolished. With the exception of the year of 1906, the spirit of progress and liberialism was stronger and better organized in Pennsylvania in 1912 and 1913 than it had been for many years before, or has been since that time. This reform measure was adopted at a time when no one dared to oppose it, and when the people were alertly interested in government. It was taken away after the scene had shifted and people were interested in other things. No history of the non-partisan ballot in Pennsylvania should fail to mention this fact.[3]

The writer will now answer certain questions that were asked in the introduction of this study. First, how did men who lived through both periods react to the non-partisan system? The views of men varied with their economic interest, their political connections, and their attitude of mind. Those elected officials that can invariably count upon the support of the regular party organization were often opposed to the non-partisan ballot. It permitted the lone wolf candidate, the independent, the non-organization candidate, the man that would not take orders from "higher ups" to be elected. Under this system men who were not in good party standing might succeed and even succeed at the expense of a regular party man. This weakens the party ties, and as our government is based on parties, these ties should be strengthened, rather than weakened. It is natural for a candidate to see the welfare of his community in the light of his own well being. When he says that the non-partisan ballot was of great benefit to his city, one may guess that in a good many cases it helped him

[3]Writer's manuscript, Political Pennsylvania in 1913 and 1919.

or some friend into office and if he is opposed to it, some corresponding concrete reason may be found. Because of this idea the writer presented considerable descriptive data concerning those elected candidates that expressed opinions on the non-partisan ballot.

Just as the organization man was invariably opposed to this ballot, the independent was invariably for it. He said it made it possible for an official to serve the people instead of the party; to remain independent of private interest groups searching for special favors; for a man to run for office who was not a politician or who had never sought election before, and it gave the man in office a freedom to serve the people that he might not otherwise have had. Numerically and logically the position taken by the advocates of the non-partisan ballot is stronger than the position of the former group.[4]

The views of the defeated candidates are very much like those of the elected officials. However, a higher percentage of the defeated candidates favored the non-partisan ballot than of the elected ones.

The party leaders and members of party committees constitute a group that is naturally and invariably opposed to the non-partisan idea anywhere. It sometimes permits a man to stand successfully for election without their support. It makes more difficult their task of electing men to office and managing affairs afterwards. It permits irresponsible men to hold office. It weakens the party system, and since our government is a government of parties the non-partisan ballot is fundamentally destructive. The party committeeman that favors the non-partisan ballot for the reason that it enables the voter to choose a man because of his ability is a rare exception to the rule.

The attitude of the press varied as the economic and

[4]The superiority in numbers might be explained by the generally recognized fact that those individuals that favor any given idea are more likely to write a letter or answer a questionnaire than are those that oppose it. Then too, those persons that favored the non-partisan ballot doubtless were more confident of the soundness of their position than were the opposing groups.

political interest of the newspaper varied, and it was also directly related to the temperament of the editor. Certain newspapers were for the non-partisan system and others were opposed to it. It was generally favored in 1913 before it was used, but because it did not eliminate partisanship and render the party organization sterile it was forsaken by the newspapers that were not pleased with the results achieved under it. In 1919 the distinctly liberal newspapers and those that were affiliated with the minority party generally took a positive stand for it, but many of the other newspapers were of the opinion that since it had failed to eliminate partisanship from local contests it could not be of very much value. The success of the non-partisan ballot would have been greater had it received in 1915 and 1917 the vigorous support that certain newspapers gave it in 1913.

The arguments for and against the non-partisan ballot set up by its friends and enemies seem to show that one group believes that the people are capable of governing themselves and choosing their own leaders, while the other group doubts this, and holds that the people should follow the guidance of their political party. The party will endorse capable men and in case it does not it will be held strictly accountable.

Second, how did the candidates chosen under the non-partisan system compare with those that were elected while the partisan system was in use? This question is not easily answered. In spite of the material that has been accumulated, more is needed before one can venture to speak with absolute authority on the point. However, an examination of the evidence indicates that the men chosen while the non-partisan ballot was in use were superior in education, occupation and wealth to those chosen in the following period under the party system. This difference as expressed in percentages is not very great, but it is significant.

Third, the interest of the voter in those elections in which the non-partisan and partisan ballots were used varied with the election year and the local situation more than with the

type of ballot. However, an examination of the available statistical material on this point reveals the fact that the greatest marked differences in percentages of population voting are found in separate partisan contests, not in the partisan contests as contrasted with contests in which the non-partisan ballot was used. Concretely, more people voted in presidential elections than in any other; the smallest part of the electorate that cast a ballot in any election voted in gubernatorial elections. The number voting in mayoralty elections fell somewhere between. It is not as large as the former, nor as small as the latter.

Considering the inclusion of the women's vote in 1921 and 1923 and the war in 1917, it is difficult to make a comparison of interest in partisan and non-partisan mayoralty elections, save on the basis of 1919, and the non-partisan period. The evidence concerning the two types of mayoralty elections shows that the difference in the vote was in no case greater than 1.4 percent[5] and if the war year, 1917 is not counted, the difference is 0.8 percent. This indicates greater interest in the 1919 election. This slight difference however in view of the added light that is to be gained from the knowledge that fewer people voted in either 1914 or 1918 than in 1913, 1915 or 1917 is not sufficient to enable one to say that the non-partisan ballot lessens the interest of the electorate in a contest at the polls. Its effect in stimulating or repressing the voters' interest is likely to be dependent as the writer has said, upon other factors, such as the personality of the candidate, the activity of a party organization, an issue, or the temper of the electorate at a given moment. Moreover, an examination of newspaper files seems to indicate that as much news space was given to non-partisan contests as the others. On the basis of the evidence a more conclusive statement than this cannot be made.

Fourth, one cannot say what effect the non-partisan ballot has on campaign expenses and campaign methods without

[5]That is, 1.4 percent of the total population.

considering some concrete individual in a particular campaign. However, in general the independent candidate will spend more money in contending for office when party ballots are used than when non-partisan ballots are employed. Just a reverse of this situation will confront the regular party organization man. This is largely because the use of the non-partisan ballot is likely to create a contest where none before existed. Men not in good party standing might fight for the right to hold office in a non-partisan contest. This will cause the expenditure of money: more for the party man; less for the independent. This opinion is invariably expressed by regulars and independents who have campaigned under both systems. However, here too, as the writer has pointed out in another connection, the temper of the electorate, the personality of the candidate and the strength of the party organization in a given campaign are bound to have a more direct bearing on the cost of running for office than any mere electoral device created solely by law.

Campaign methods are likewise subjected to many of the factors that determine the amount of money it costs for running for public office. Party organizations were successfully active in both types of contests. In those in which party names were officially employed they often had a monopoly on organized efforts that they did not have in the earlier period, for then personal and group and various civic organizations and committees of one hundred were very much in evidence. Also in this early period certain newspapers persistently championed chosen candidates or groups of candidates for municipal office. These and similar facts go far to explain the attitude of the party man and the independent toward the non-partisan ballot.

Fifth, how partisan is a non-partisan administration? The writer's study of appointments revealed the presence of much partisanship in the 1913-1919 periods; especially in Reading in 1916 were men appointed and removed for what appear to have been partisan reasons. Of course the important question is whether or not there was more par-

tisanship in one period than the other, and to what extent this difference is due to the non-partisan ballot. This is a question that is difficult to answer on the basis of the evidence that is now available. Bearing in mind this warning, the writer suggests that there was less partisanship in the earlier period, than in the later one in which party ballots were used. And furthermore, the partisanship that did exist was subject to the more or less constant criticism and protests of different newspapers and civic agencies. It was furtive; it could not be openly defended in the light of day. It was often tolerated but rarely accepted by everyone. There was a realization that both the letter and the spirit of the law were being violated.

A question that admitted far more conclusive examination than some of the foregoing is: "Does the non-partisan ballot result in the elimination of issues?" The answer is, "No." The writer's evidence on several campaigns is just about exhaustive and on a score of others it is great enough to be definitely significant. In both cases the facts seem to indicate that issues can be most squarely presented to the electorate in a non-partisan contest. It is in an election in which there are no party labels that municipal electoral battles can be most meaningful. Candidates can take their stand because of their attitudes regarding an issue. This may mean that certain Democrats and certain Republicans oppose other Democrats and Republicans in a campaign in which the city manager form of government is the issue. There is no Republican or Democratic position as to the city manager form of government. Why pretend that there is? This is a local question and if the voters decide it without having prejudice-soaked symbols placed before them on the ballot they may decide the question on its merits.

This still leaves the question: How can public opinion be guided if there are no regular party organizations to enlighten the electorate? First of all the writer hastens to say that a local contest in which there are no national party labels is one thing; a local contest in which there are no national organizations is something utterly different. The

state may abolish the party name by statute. The national party organization cannot be so easily legislated out of existence. It satisfies an incarnate want. As long as the need is there, and there is a definite need for some agency to guide public opinion in a municipal election of any size—there will be an organization to meet it. In a highly organized state like Pennsylvania it is more than likely that nine times out of ten the most effective political organization in a given third class city is a branch of the national Republican organization. With or without the assistance of party labels on the ballot this organization will often succeed in putting its men into office. Those who intelligently favor the non-partisan ballot realize this; they, however, want the national party organization to contend for power on the same footing as do other organizations that are active in the campaign. The personality of a candidate, a party organization, an issue or a party name may determine the way a vote is cast. A civic organization, a committee of one hundred, or some other organized group of independents can hope to successfully compete with the "regular" party organization as far as the first three of these methods of appeal are concerned, but the fourth is a virtual monopoly in the hands of the regular organization. According to certain critics it serves as a decoy to lure the traditional partisan and to befog the vision of others. Therefore, they would rule the words "Republican" and "Democrat" out of municipal contests. Organizations would be forced to stand on their own feet to win votes for their candidates. If the regular party organization failed to function, a citizens' committee or a taxpayers' league would be created to guide opinion. There will be need for such an agency in any type of election in which a large number of people vote.

It is the writer's conclusion that the non-partisan ballot should not have been repealed upon the evidence presented to the legislature, or upon any evidence that this investigation has revealed. The non-partisan ballot may facilitate sound thinking even tho it cannot take the place of such thinking in municipal affairs. Its value is limited, and yet

it has a very real place. The energy displayed by certain leaders of the Republican organization in doing away with this ballot over many protests is one testimonial to the its effectiveness.

In the foregoing pages the writer has presented the pertinent evidence that he could gather on the operation of the non-partisan ballot in Pennsylvania, and he has drawn his conclusions from that evidence. His aim has been to evaluate this material in an objective manner. However, before he finally concludes this last chapter, he wonders if he will be permitted to express a personal opinion—one that thus far cannot be supported by any exact quantitative data or method, and yet an opinion that has come to the writer because of a thousand contacts that he has made with the non-partisan ballot in the several years that he has been investigating it. Justice Holmes once said in another connection, that: "The decision will depend on a judgment or intuition more subtle than any articulate major premise," and when the ultimate decision is reached regarding the non-partisan ballot, it is likely that certain elements must be considered that cannot be tested with a litmus paper or measured with a vernier caliper.

The writer is thinking of the psychological effect of the party name on the official ballot. He fully agrees with Munro[6] and other observers who say that taking designations off the ballot does not prevent the voter from acquiring this knowledge from a dozen other sources. However, in spite of this fact, it seems clearly possible that a given individual may more carefully consider the ability and record of a candidate when non-partisan instead of partisan ballots are used. The voter may well know that John Doe is a Republican and yet if he is not confronted with the insignia of that party as he stands in the privacy of the polling booth he will vote for the man. Notwithstanding partisan contests waging at white heat outside the polling booth, it is possible that within that little area there is a partial im-

[6]"The Government of American Cities." p 191.

munity; it may constitute a neutral zone that is isolated from the field of combat; the four walls of the polling place may to some extent provide insulation against the electric party currents that often make the air sing at election time in Pennsylvania. To know that a man is a Republican or Socialist is different from being reminded of that fact at the very psychological moment that the ballot is marked.[7]

In speaking in favor of the non-partisan ballot, the writer is not comparing it with some model of perfection that can exist only as a concept of the imagination, but rather with some alternative electoral device that is actually used. The significant question is not whether this ballot is perfect, but whether it more nearly satisfies a given need than any other ballot. As Beard has said: "For some social problems there is no mechanical solution."[8] However, a full realization of this fact ought not to lead one to ignore electoral devices, but rather to evaluate them for what they are worth. Their use is rigidly limited; the problem then is to select the device best adapted to the needs of the community, so that the power that makes for civic righteousness—and there is no community in which this divine force is large—will not be needlessly handicapped.

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[7]The following instance illustrates the writer's idea. In 1924 the students at the University of Pennsylvania were conducting a poll on the presidential candidates. One of the three most brilliant students that the writer knows came to him and said: "I went into the election booth with the full intention of voting for LaFollette, but when I saw his name under the Socialist column I weakened. I couldn't do it. I just naturally voted for Coolidge."

[8]"American Government." p 200.

APPENDIX

History of the Non-Partisan Ballot in the Legislature

The arguments for and against the repealer as given in the debates in the House will give one a fairly accurate idea of the opinions and viewpoints on the non-partisan ballot of the different individuals and groups throughout the cities of the third class that have had experience with it. The following quotation is especially typical of the arguments against the ballot. In support of his bill, Mr. Willson said,

" . . . that out of 34 Republicans, 30 of them, if they had to vote on it according to their own consciences would vote for this bill to repeal the non-partison ballot—unless they had been instructed by their council, who are elected under the non-partisan ballot, and naturally would be against this bill."[1]

Mr. Willson also said that,

" . . . whatever good has followed the enactment of this law (Clark Act) has been due to the features of the Act under which municipal officers are elected by the whole city instead of wards. Certainly we are satisfied from our experience that partisanship has not been eliminated from municipal elections, factionalism is as rampant as before. In practice we have found members of the minority party combined with the disgruntled elements of the dominant party, and by this means we have placed in office men who never could have been elected except under the spur of party revenge. In my own city, men elected to the school board have been exceptionally good, and they were elected by wards on partisan tickets. Why should we permit a system to continue under which minority factions are able to rule the politics of our city?"[2]

He then goes on to argue upon the comparative values of the old and new election systems when it comes to dealing with Socialists and other such difficult political factors:

"At present we have a Socialist controller and one Socialist councilman, and I am told that Williamsport elected a mayor who was not a naturalized citizen of the United States, and had to have him taken into court to get him out of office.

"The non-partisan law has failed to attract as candidates the business men and public spirited citizens because they do not wish to get mixed up in partisan entanglements. I believe in party responsi-

[1]Pa. Leg. J1. 1919, page 1634-5.
[2]Ibid., page 1253.

bility, and feel that it will result in the selection of better men in our city council, as it has resulted in the selection of better men on our school board. Under our direction, if good men are selected they will get the support of good men of the opposing party. This check in my mind, is better in getting good results than the present law."[3]

Another argument against the non-partisan ballot, in his mind, was the inconvenience of having more than one ballot:

"Then again, why should a citizen as he goes to the polls be encumbered by more than one ballot—one for the county officers, another for the non-partisan judiciary, and still another for the municipal election? Voting should be made easy, and not complex, and one ballot should be sufficient. What good reasons can you give for electing municipal officers by a different method than you elect county, state, and national officers? The principles that we stand for should assume prominence rather than the individual. It is important of course, but it is even more important that high and proper principles are carried out. We believe in our political party as much as we believe in our church."[4]

Mr. William T. Ramsey, Chester, favored the repeal, for he believed that good men could be elected under all forms of government, and that it is impossible for a man to be a non-partisan in politics. Recent elections in Pennsylvania's cities have supported this latter idea.

"In the city I represent, we have never had a Democrat serving since we have had a non-partisan ballot; they have all been Republicans."[5]

Mr. Dithrich of Pittsburgh favored the repeal he said, first, because the city of Duquesne favored it; and,

" . . . secondly, because I am a loyal party man, and being a loyal party man, I am naturally opposed to every non-partisan measure, whether it is in the city or county, or in the judiciary. My only regret is that it has not been politically wise at this time, to allow us to vote down the non-partisan law in second class cities and in the judiciary. If we have parties in the nation and in the state, logically we should have party elections in the cities and boroughs."[6]

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[3]Ibid., page 1254.
[4]Ibid., page 1253-4.
[5]However, it should be mentioned that one anti-organization Republican was elected to the Chester city council in 1917, and he (T. Woodward Trainer) says that his election was facilitated by the use of the non-partisan ballot.
[6]Pa. Leg. Jl. 1919, page 1635.

He later said in reply to Mr. Woner, who quoted Penrose as endorsing the use of the non-partisan ballot in local elections,

" . . . that while I am proud to follow the leadership of the Senior Senator from Pennsylvania, I do not think his judgment is infallible, and if the gentleman is correctly quoting him, then I think he has slightly slipped from his party moorings, and while I may not be as big a Republican as he is, I think in this particular issue that my Republicanism stands out a little stronger than his does."[7]

Mr. Simpson of Allegheny county and Dravosburg, based his reasons for opposing the non-partisan ballot upon the need for party government.

"I am a partisan born in the flesh and bred in the bone and I believe there are just as good men in the Republican party as ever graced the Democratic party, and I believe there are just as good men in the Democratic party as there are in the Republican party; and I have no quarrel with men . . . I want you to know that in every city of the third class, in every city of the second class, and in every borough and in every township of the first class, and in every township of the second class, the party in the majority is held responsible for the government, and they ought to be picked along strict party lines. I want to tell you that when this Clark Act was passed, it was passed, not for the express purpose of having a non-partisan government, but it was passed for the sole purpose of doing away with a select and common council—something that had out-lived its days of usefulness—and the non-partisan part of the Act was a secondary consideration and was enacted solely and exclusively for the purpose of giving it a trial. . . . We have no better men in office than if you had a strict party election and in a great many cases not as good; and those men are held responsible to no particular party; and you cannot approach them like you could if they were responsible to a particular party."[8]

The more significant parts of the argument in the House in favor of the non-partisan ballot are as follows: Mr. Willert, Erie county, said that he had thoroly canvassed his city and had found that his people did not want the non-partisan act repealed, for they were well satisfied with it. He was then asked by Mr. Harer how he had been able to ascertain the opinion of the people of his district. His answer was,

" . . . by canvassing the boards of trade, the chambers of commerce

[7]Ibid., page 1635.
[8]Pa. Leg. Jl., 1919, page 1636.

as well as labor organizations who have endorsed the present non-partisan act."

Mr. Bolard, who is from a county containing two third class cities, then said that his constituency were entirely satisfied with the present law. He added,

" . . . we say this particularly to those representatives who come from districts that do not have third class cities."[9]

Probably the strongest argument for the retention of the non-partisan feature of the Clark Act was made by Mr. Robert Wallace, of New Castle, Lawrence county. We shall quote his speech here in part:

"The non-partisan ballot has been in service a number of years, and we think fairly successfully. Now we have the proposition before us to repeal that law and to go back to partisan politics in our municipal affairs. We as Republicans of this House, I think should hesitate and consider carefully before we repeal this law. . . . Why should a man, in order to qualify for mayor or city councilman in third class cities, be either Republican or Democrat, or any other partisan politics? The only qualification for a mayor or city councilman is the man's qualification for office—his ability as an executive, or as a judicial officer, and it makes little difference to the man who votes, whose desire is for good government, what his politics may be. We all believe that public officials that have to do with state-wide policies of government can best be selected on a partisan platform because there is a state-wide policy that is too big for any one candidate to bring before the people and have it considered by the people. . . . The non-partisan law gives to the people of a locality the largest degrees of home rule that any election law can possibly give. In electing a mayor under this law it is absolutely impossible for a man to be elected unless he gets a majority. . . of all the votes cast for that office. If you are in favor of a majority rule in this democracy, then we ought to stand by this law. We might just as well talk plainly—we don't want undesirable men elected to office. A great majority of those here don't want Socialists to hold office unless he is a patriotic, law-abiding citizen."

He then quotes Senator Penrose's well known statement in which the senator endorses the non-partisan ballot for local elections:

"I am a firm believer in the non-partisan ballot for local government as the means for electing judges and for municipal officers. I

[9]Pa. Leg. Jl., 1919, page 1254.

know that there are a number of Republicans and Democrats in Pennsylvania who don't agree with me, but my theory is that it is best for local government." That is the proposition that we have before us tonight—'local government'. I would even extend it to boroughs, but I am not forcing my views."

He then speaks of the plan of city government for third class cities.

"Our present plan of city government known as the Pittsburgh plan, was adopted as the result of the great uprising of citizens of Pittsburgh against the conditions prevailing under the old partisan plan of city government. In this movement the chamber of commerce took the lead: the non-partisan bill for second class cities was drafted by a committee of this chamber: the chamber actively advocated its passage and has sent its committee to Harrisburg to protect it against every bill which has since been introduced."

In concluding, he says:

"Gentlemen, I have in my hands protests from a majority of all the third class cities in this commonwealth against the repeal of this bill, I am not going to take your time to read them all, but I want to call your attention to the fact that Allentown, Altoona, Bradford, Butler, Coatesville, Connellsville, Corry, Erie, Franklin, McKeesport, Monongahela City, New Castle, Reading, Oil City, Wilkes Barre and several others have passed resolutions protesting against the repeal of this law."[10]

Later, after the measure had been defeated on a final vote and the vote was being reconsidered, Mr. Wallace said that he could see no reason why men who lived in Philadelphia, or in some of the outlying counties ought to vote on this repeal when it did not affect them and did affect the third class cities and they did not want it repealed. He said the attitude of the third class cities regarding the non-partisan ballot could easily be found out by examining the vote on this measure in the legislative record of April 21st, where it would be seen that a large majority of representatives from third class cities had voted against this bill.[11] He also said that the governor had publicly stated that he was opposed

[10]Pa. Leg. Jl., 1919, page 1253.

[11]Seventeen representatives from cities of the third class voted against repeal on April 21st. Six representatives for repeal and eight representatives from these cities did not vote at all when the repealer was finally voted on the first time. Ibid., page 1255.

to the repealer and that the Republicans ought to support the governor.[12]

Mr. Woner, from Butler, spoke with great force against the imputation that those who favored the retaining of the non-partisan feature were not loyal party men.

"It is true that political parties are essential to this government . . . but do you suppose that by taking away from the third class cities the one element that is progressive, the one element that is up-to-date, the one element that has been studied by municipal experts, the one factor that has marked progress in municipal government—do you suppose that by taking away the non-partisan feature of the third class city act, you are going to promote the good Republican party in this state or nation?"[13]

He then said that his own city, and other third class cities of the state, were threatened with the election of Socialist mayors, and that for that reason he and the representatives from the other towns were especially eager for the retention of the non-partisan feature, since they considered that feature their best weapon against Socialists.[14]

This measure was voted upon in the House, as we have

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[12]"Now, gentlemen, I know there is a disposition among the members of this House, especially those representing the majority party, to faithfully and conscientiously support the governor in his administration, and I can see why a lot of you men who do not live in third class cities and who do not represent third class cities would be disposed to vote for this bill if it were an administration measure, and if the governor of this commonwealth was back of it and advocated its repeal, you might wish to support it. But, gentlemen, when you know that the governor of this commonwealth is not back of this measure and that it is not an administration measure, and he has stated in public print that he is opposed to this measure, and he has stated within the last few days that he had not gone on record as favoring this measure, then, gentlemen, I see no reason why you men who may live in Philadelphia or live in some of the outlying counties or live in the city of Pittsburgh, ought to vote for this repeal when it does not affect you and it does affect us, and when we don't want it repealed." Mr. Willson then asked Mr. Wallace, "on what authority he quotes the governor of this state as being opposed to this measure." Mr. Wallace replied, "because, sir, on two different occasions, thru the public print he has stated his opposition to this measure. Furthermore, he has stated to the members of this house that he does not want this bill to come over to him." Ibid., page 1636.

[13]Ibid., page 1522.

[14]Pa. Leg. Jl., 1919, page 1523. It is to be noted that this Socialist argument was used both as a reason for repeal of the non-partisan ballot and as a reason against repeal of the same ballot.

said, on April 21st, and did not pass. A week later a motion was made, by Mr. Shunk,[15] of Erie, and seconded by Mr. West of Montour, to reconsider the vote. Mr. Robert L. Wallace protested, saying that this bill had been fairly defeated the week before, and that he did not believe that the sentiment of the state had changed in so short a period. He went on to say that two years ago, the second class cities, thru this legislature, had prevented the repeal of the non-partisan law in their cities, and he could not see why the men of the second class cities now wanted to abolish the non-partisan ballot in the cities of the third class. He said that this bill had had great publicity throughout the state, and that it had been considered bad legislation a week ago, when a full membership of the house had been present, and had definitely defeated it by a decisive vote, and that it was bad legislation now.[16]

Mr. Simpson then said:

"I say it was necessary for two men who voted against this bill to make the motion to reconsider the vote by which it was defeated, and why shouldn't they? If they go back to their homes and find that the sentiment in their cities has changed, they have a right to come back and make this motion. . . . I ask you now to try and rectify the wrong that has been done to the third class cities of the state of Pennsylvania, and rectify it for our benefit. I represent a third class city as well as the gentleman from Lawrence, and I ask you now to try and rectify the wrong that we committed last week, by reconsidering this bill and placing it on the calendar."[17]

At the time of the final passage, Mr. Woner declared that he wanted to know what those who now opposed the non-partisan ballot knew about conditions in Butler, or in McKeesport, or in New Castle? He asked those who had voted in favor of keeping the non-partisan plan and who were now going to vote against it to give him a logical reason for changing their minds. He said that the change had doubtless been due to some log-rolling.

"If you throw Butler into a partisan government, you do it against Butler's protest!"[18]

[15]Ibid., page 1451.
[16]Ibid.
[17]Ibid., page 1451.
[18]Ibid., page 1635.

The Non-Partisan Ballot and the League of Cities of the Third Class

Nelson Bennett, the secretary of the legislative committee of the league, wrote to the governor at the time the bill was pending, as follows:

"The third class cities governed by the Clark Act, embrace a population of over 1,200,000, and at least 20 of these cities, and numerous civic bodies, have petitioned you for a hearing on House Bill 949.

"The short non-partisan ballot provisions have been largely responsible for the success of the commission form of government in over 400 American cities: Pennsylvania should not make the mistake of giving over 1,000,000 people a camouflaged form of city government.

"Sincerely hoping that you will give the petitioning cities a hearing, I remain, Nelson Bennett."[1]

This hearing which was insistently demanded was held at the capitol in Harrisburg on Thursday, May 22, 1919, at 12:30 noon. Four representatives of the League were present, and they were given a 45-minute hearing. The governor seemed inclined toward vetoing the bill, but he made no absolute promise: the bill was later recalled, but the legislature did not allow it to die.[2] When it was up before the governor again, Mr. W. Stratton of Reading, chairman of the league, again protested.

"The fickleness of the legislature in again passing H. B. 949, non-partisan repealer, compels us to again revive the mass of protests, now in your hands, against the approval of this bill. We do not wish to take up your valuable time, which is so crowded at present with innumerable and important affairs, but should it be desirable and necessary, we will furnish you with additional and abundance of evidence to show the lack of wisdom in enacting such legislation, especially at this time. Good business is good politics, and this proposed act is neither.

"The League of Third Class Cities and numerous civic bodies thruout the state have faith in you and are confident in your expressions made to us that your unwavering steadfastness which produced the

[1] "Proceedings of the League of Cities of the Third Class," 1919, pages 28-32.

[2] The "Philadelphia North American" for June 1, 1919, explained the situation in these words. "The repeal crowd, headed by Secretary of Internal Affairs Jim Woodward, and Senator Max Leslie, the boss of Pittsburgh, are pumping away to keep life in the measure (the repealer). The League of Third Class Cities is adding argument with a view to making sure that the repeal never goes back to the governor.

recall of this bill sometime ago[3] will protect the people's interest."

The proceedings of the League close the account of this episode with the trenchant remark:

"Many letters and telegrams were sent asking the governor to veto the Willson Bill, but the governor pleased his friends around him and signed the bill."[4]

The "North American's" comment after the final signing of the measure is typical of what the League has said whenever the question of a non-partisan repealer has arisen.

"The passage of the Willson bill proved rather embarrassing to the governor, according to reports, since the vast majority of the votes affected were against it, as were also the labor unions, and it was recalled for the purpose of letting it expire. Professional politicians were hoping that it would become a law, since it would have given them a chance to retrench themselves at City Hall."[5]

There has been little said in the proceedings of the League about the non-partisan ballot since its repeal; however, what has been said is decidedly favorable to the system. In the proceedings for 1923 there is a statement by Dr. Charles Collmar of Easton that reveals, judging by his opinion and the lack of contrary evidence, how little the attitude of the League has changed regarding cities in 1913.

"Of course, good representatives are a prime necessity for any kind of good government, and the non-partisan ballot, by means of which representatives were chosen without regard to their party affiliations, was the best part of the Clark Act.

"So when the legislature in 1919, at the command of party bosses who had been unable to get control of some of the cities of Pennsylvania when under the non-partisan plan of election, amended the Act by substituting the present party primaries and party elections, it in effect cut the heart out of the commission form of government.

"Persons interested in good city government should insist that the legislature promptly restore the non-partisan plan of electing city representatives."[6]

The foregoing discussion will give one an idea of the views of what legislators, and others actively interested in city government in Pennsylvania, held regarding the value of

[3]Proceedings, etc., 1919, pages 28-32.
[4]Proceedings, etc., 1919, pages 28-32.
[5]Journal, 1919.
[6]Proceedings, etc., 1923, pages 167-169.

the non-partisan ballot in local elections in 1919. However, those groups and individuals outside of the legislature who wanted the non-partisan system abolished remained silent while the non-partisan ballot was being done away with, and those who favored the non-partisan ballot protested when it was taken from them. This largely accounts for the inclusion of certain statements of the League and newspapers against repeal without a similar amount of evidence of this sort in favor of the repealer.

One Philadelphia representative who had changed his vote and who had not remembered why he had changed it came to see the writer in answer to his letter. He said that he did not want to write letters, but that he would be glad to discuss the question. He further stated that he was now over 70 years old and wanted to do as much good as he could. He did not remember the repealer and he was eager to say that a state legislator can be familiar with only a very small fraction of the bills on which he votes. The vast majority of measures mean nothing at all to him, and with the exception of the very few measures that he is reasonable interested in, he votes as he is asked to vote by a friend, or told to vote. He added,

"The representative does not know what sentiment in his district is, but he does know what some boss in the Lincoln building wants. Those representatives who changed their votes on the repealer were doubtless told to do so. Representatives from first and second class cities cared nothing about third class cities; they voted as they were told and they traded for votes and log-rolled."

He later told the writer that one of his neighbors, X, who was also a representative in 1919, had received the writer's letter. The writer asked if X had remembered why he had changed his vote on the non-partisan repealer and the reply was,

"Lord, no! X couldn't remember five minutes the way he voted!"

A Philadelphia senator who was a member of the house

in 1919 wrote that it was his belief,

" . . . that the senators representing third class cities were strong for repeal and if I did change it might have occurred that I had yielded to their wishes. This frequently occurs. A personal opinion of a senator from Philadelphia would give way to the requests of a senator regarding legislation affecting his district."

A representative from a county without any third class city said regarding his change of vote,

"My reason was to let them try it out and if it did not work well, a new bill could be introduced and passed at the next session; but it was never brought up again. I am still a member, so the third class cities must like it."

A representative from a city of the third class who voted against the repealer wrote,

"The forces back of the non-partisan repeal in 1919 were representative of the state Republican organization."

A member from Williamsport who favored the repealer, said,

"As time goes on I am more convinced than ever that this was a good move to make in repealing this act. The very foundation of our government depends upon party lines and I would go even further in abolishing direct primaries in as much as we are not getting the proper kind of men for council and other positions in the city. When we have placed a responsible man in office, there is always an endeavor on the part of the party to see that this man performs the duties of his office in the proper manner. If the man is not responsible to any party he does not care and the people in the long run will suffer."

A representative from Erie who changed his vote and voted for repeal after speaking strongly in favor of the non-partisan ballot and against the repealer wrote,

"I do not recall the exact bill that you refer to, and therefore, I am sorry that I cannot give you the information you desire."

A representative from Meadville who, according to the legislative record, had changed his vote, declared that he had voted for the repeal both times, and that,

" . . . this city of Meadville was strongly in favor of repeal of the non-partisan ballot law. My own personal views on the non-partisan

ballot were that it was useless law. It served no useful purpose. Men were non-partisan only when they were running for office, and it helped shrewd, cunning politicans into office when party lines would prevent it."

A close observer of politics in Pennsylvania told the writer that in the 1919 session of the legislature Penrose permitted the non-partisan ballot to be repealed in order to get sufficient support to bring about the passage of the Philadelphia charter, a ballot law, and to secure a modification of the registration law; because of a trade, Penrose permitted the non-partisan ballot to be destroyed. This same person said that Beidleman's brain gave birth to the repealer.

The president of a state-wide organization that is only secondarily political said that the Dauphin county representatives never took kindly to the non-partisan idea, and were active in having it repealed.

A man who was several times a mayor of a city of the third class was in Harrisburg in 1919, and he attempted to stand for the non-partisan ballot, but the Republican machine headed by Penrose was very desirous of repealing it. According to him,

" . . . the reason for the repeal was not even camouflaged."

They flatly stated that the Republican bosses at Williamsport, Scranton, Wilkes Barre, and Pittsburg wanted the law repealed because it lowered the Republican vote in the Republican strongholds. Another reason for the repeal, according to this person, was the objection of the Republican leaders to the additional expense due to the fact that they now had to make two fights instead of one.

CHART SHOWING THE WAY CITIES OF THE THIRD CLASS HAVE VOTED IN PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS FROM 1892 TO 1924

R—Republican candidate carried the city.
D—Democratic candidate carried the city.
I—More votes were cast for third party candidates than for either Democratic or Republican candidates.

	1891	1896	1900	1904	1908	1912	1916	1920	1924
Allentown	D	R	R	R	R	D	D	R	R
Altoona	R	R	R	R	R	I	R	R	R
Connellsville							R	R	R
Bradford	R	R	R	R	R	D	R	R	R
Carbondale	D	R	R	R	D	D	R	R	R
Chester	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
Corry	R	D	R	R	R	D	D	R	R
Easton	D	R	R	R	R	D	R	R	R
Erie	R	R	R	R	R	D	D	R	R
Franklin	R	R	R	R	R	I	R	R	R
Harrisburg	R	R	R	R	R	I	R	R	R
Hazleton			R	R	R	I	R	R	R
Johnstown	D	R	R	R	R	I	R	R	R
Lebanon	R	R	R	R	R	I	R	R	R
Lock Haven	R	R	R	R	R	D	R	R	R
McKeesport			R	R	R	I	R	R	R
Meadville	R	R	R	R	R	D	D	R	R
Monongahela	R	R	R	R	R	R	D	R	R
New Castle	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
Oil City	R	R	R	R	R	D	D	R	R
Pittston			D	D	D	I	D	D	D
Pottsville							R	R	R
Uniontown							R	R	R
Reading	D	R	R	R	R	D	D	R	R
Titusville	D	R	R	R	R	D	R	R	R
Wilkes Barre	D	R	R	R	R	I	R	R	R
Williamsport	D	R	R	R	R	D	R	R	R
York			R	R	R	D	D	R	R

CHART SHOWING THE WAY CITIES OF THE THIRD CLASS HAVE VOTED IN GUBERNATORIAL ELECTIONS FROM 1890 TO 1922

R—Republican candidate carried the city.
D—Democratic candidate carried the city.
I—More votes were cast for third party candidates than for either Democratic or Republican candidates.

	1890	1894	1898	1902	1906	1910	1914	1918	1922
Allentown	D	R	D	D	D	D	R	D	R
Altoona	D	R	D	R	R	I	R	R	R
Connellsville							R	R	D
Bradford	D	R	D	D	I	I	R	R	R
Carbondale	D	R	I	R	D	R	R	R	R
Chester	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
Corry	D	R	D	D	R	I	D	R	R
Easton	D	R	D	R	D	R	R	R	R
Erie	D	R	D	D	R	R	R	D	R
Franklin	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
Harrisburg	D	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
Hazleton			R	R	R	I	R	R	R
Johnstown	D	R	D	R	R	I	R	R	R
Lebanon	R	R	R	R	R	I	R	R	R
Lock Haven	D	R	R	D	R	I	R	R	D
McKeesport			R	R	R	R	R	R	R
Meadville	R	R	D	R	R	R	R	R	R
Monongahela	D	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
New Castle	R	R	R	R	R	I	R	R	R
Oil City	R	R	D	R	R	R	R	R	R
Pittston		D	D	D	D	R	D	D	D
Pottsville							R	R	R
Uniontown								R	R
Reading	D	R	D	D	D	I	D	D	R
Titusville	D	R	D	D	R	R	D	R	R
Wilkes Barre	D	R	D	D	D	I	R	R	R
Williamsport	D	R	D	D	D	I	R	R	D
York			D	D	R	R	R	R	R

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